

# LONE WOLF AND CUB

羅連狼  
母子

VOLUME 1  
THE  
ASSASSIN'S  
ROAD

By KAZUO KOIKE  
& GOSEKI KOJIMA



三道水狼

# LONE WOLF

AND

# CUB

三連木狼

story  
KAZUO KOIKE

art  
GOSEKI KOJIMA



DARK HORSE MANGA™

translation  
**DANA LEWIS**  
lettering & retouch  
**DIGITAL CHAMELEON**  
cover illustration  
**FRANK MILLER with LYNN VARLEY**  
publisher  
**MIKE RICHARDSON**  
editors  
**DAN HARRIS and MIKE HANSEN**  
assistant editor  
**TIM ERVIN**  
consulting editor  
**TOREN SMITH for STUDIO PROTEUS**  
book design  
**DARIN FABRICK**  
art director  
**MARK COX**

Published by Dark Horse Manga, a division of Dark Horse Comics, Inc., in association with Kabushiki Kaisha Eiga Works and Kotaku Shoin Publishing Company, Ltd

Dark Horse Comics, Inc.  
10956 SE Main Street, Milwaukie, OR 97222  
[www.darkhorse.com](http://www.darkhorse.com)

First edition: August 2000  
ISBN-10: 1-56971-302-5  
ISBN-13: 978-1-56971-302-4

13 15 17 19 30 38 46 44

Printed in Canada

**Long Wolf and Colewell: 1—The Assassin's Road**  
Long Wolf and Colewell © 1991, 1998 KODAK SHOIN SHOKAN. All other material © 2000 Dark Horse Comics, Inc. Cover art © 2000 Frank Miller, Inc. All rights reserved. English translation rights arranged with KODAK SHOIN PUBLISHING CO., LTD. 108075 (originally published in Japan in 1999 by KODAK SHOIN PUBLISHING CO., LTD., TOKYO). No portion of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted, in any form or by any means, without the express written permission of the copyright holder. Names, characters, places, and incidents found in this publication either are the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual persons (living or dead), events, institutions, or locales without satire intent is coincidental. Dark Horse Manga™ and the Dark Horse logo are trade marks of Dark Horse Comics, Inc. All rights reserved.

To find a comic shop in your area, call the  
Comic Shop Locator Service toll-free at 1-888-266-4226

THE  
ASSASSIN'S  
ROAD

By KAZUO KOIKE  
& GOSEKI KOJIMA

子連  
連れ  
狼



VOLUME

1

# A NOTE TO READERS

*Lone Wolf and Cub* is famous for its carefully researched re-creation of Edo-Period Japan. To preserve the flavor of the work, we have chosen to retain many Edo-Period terms that have no direct equivalents in English. Japanese is written in a mix of Chinese ideograms and a syllabic writing system, resulting in numerous synonyms. In the glossary, you may encounter words with multiple meanings. These are words written with Chinese ideograms that are pronounced the same but carry different meanings. A Japanese reader seeing the different ideograms would know instantly which meaning it is, but these synonyms can cause confusion when Japanese is spelled out in our alphabet. *O-yurushi o* (please forgive us)!

# LONE WOLF AND CUB

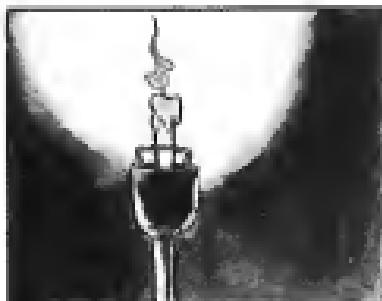


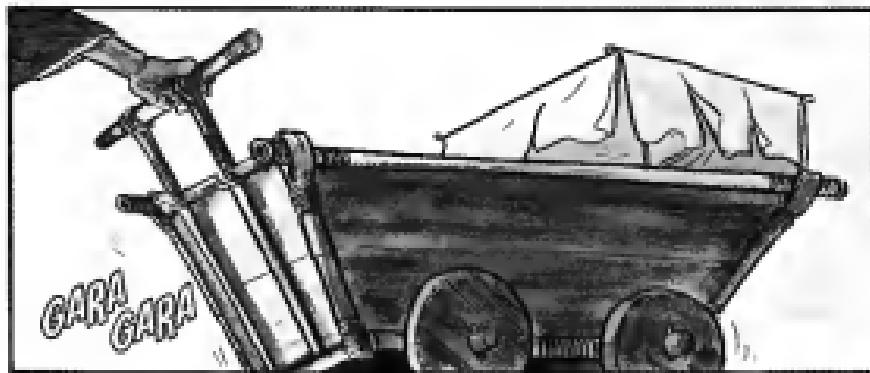
## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Son for Hire, Sword for Hire. . . . .	9
A Father Knows His Child's Heart, as Only a Child Can Know His Father's. . . . .	40
From North to South, From West to East. . . . .	70
Baby Cart on the River Styx. . . . .	99
Suio School Zanbato. . . . .	127
Waiting for the Rains. . . . .	156
Eight Gates of Deceit. . . . .	179
Wings to the Birds, Fangs to the Beast. . . . .	209
The Assassin's Road. . . . .	267
Glossary. . . . .	295
Creator Profiles. . . . .	299
The Ronin Report. . . . .	301

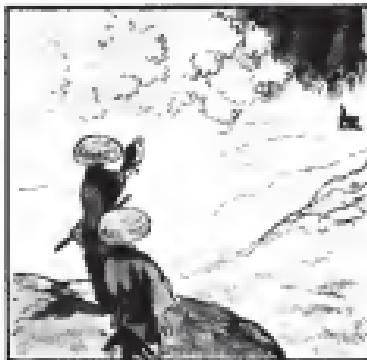
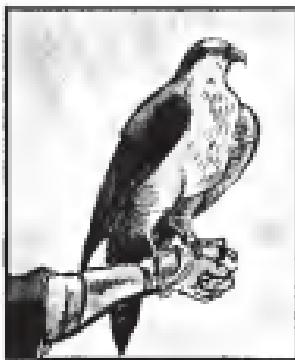


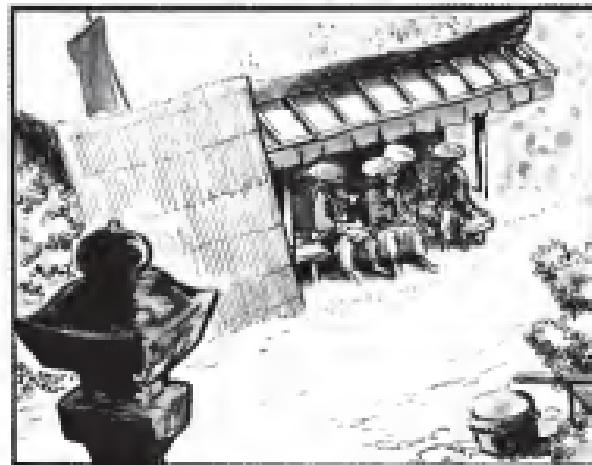
the first  
Son  
(or  
Hire,  
Sword  
(or  
Hire

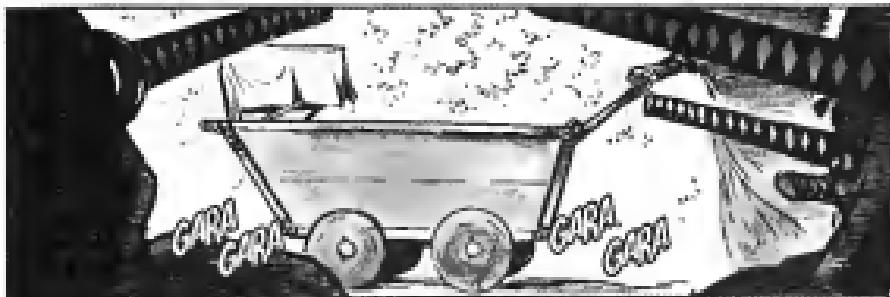




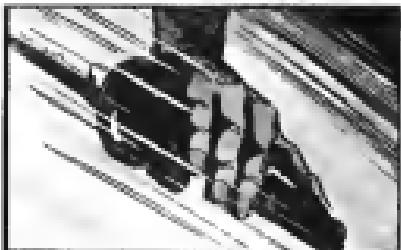
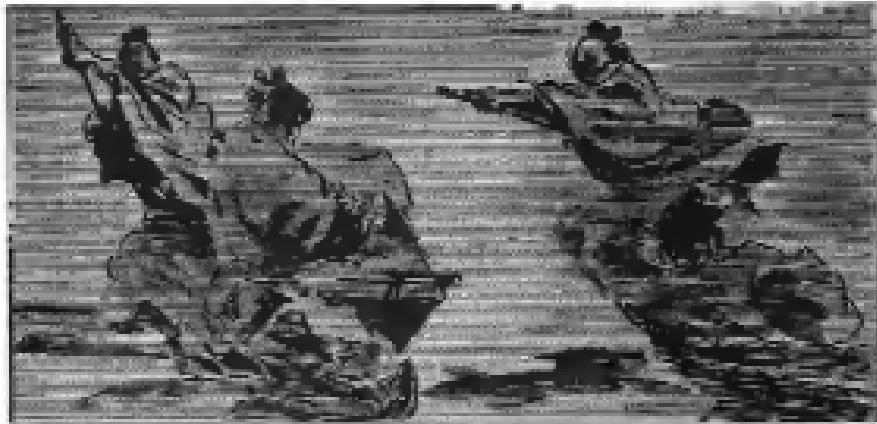
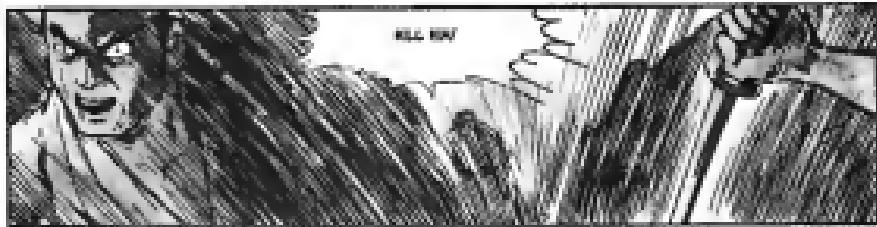




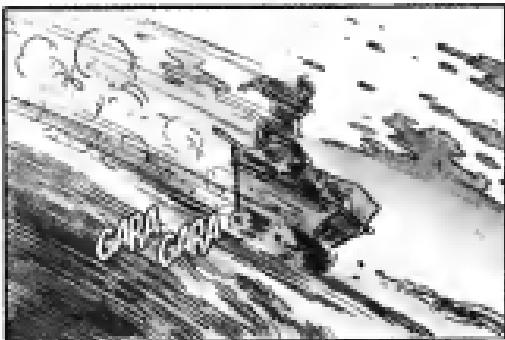
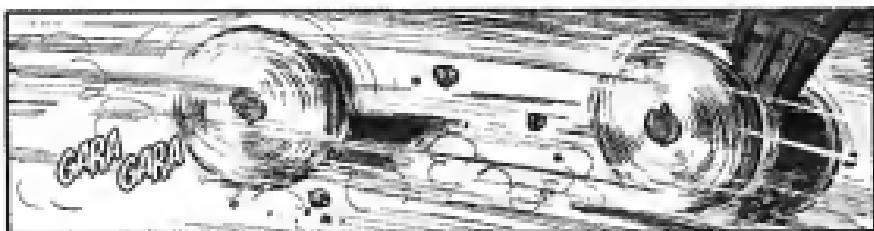


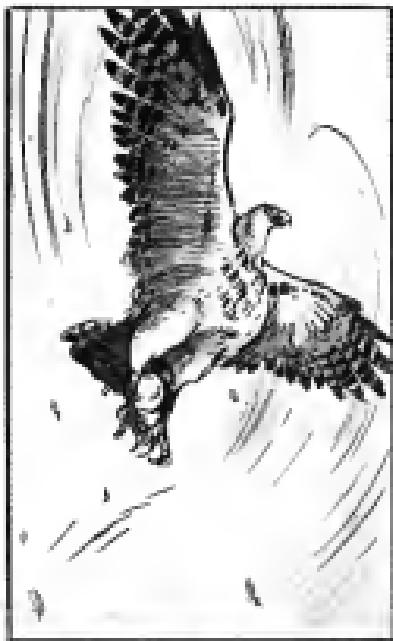




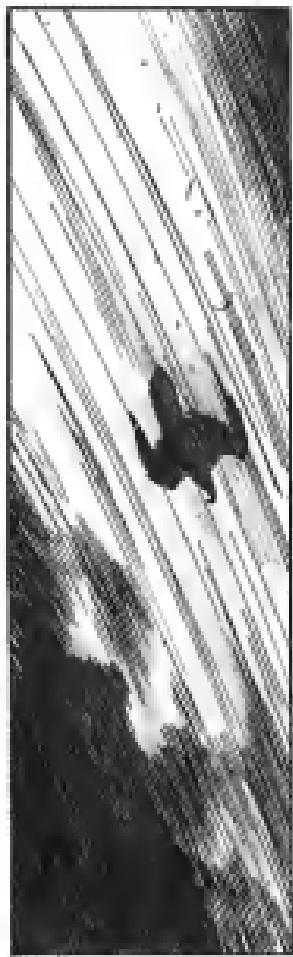










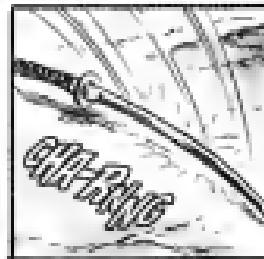


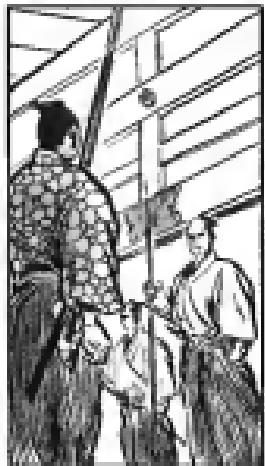


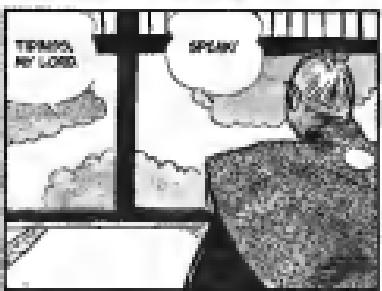
HEM  
HEM HEH  
YOU FEEL  
FOR IT

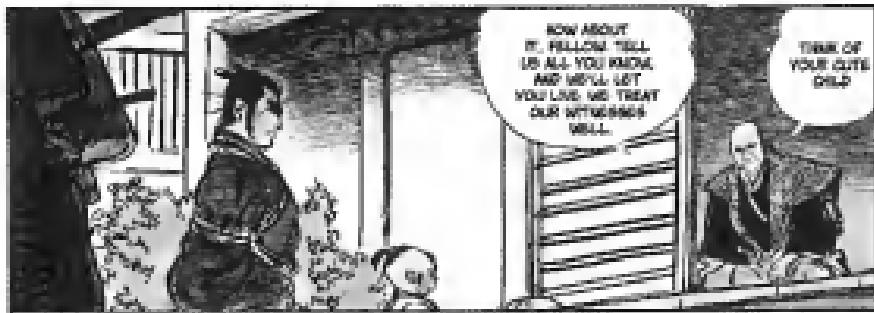
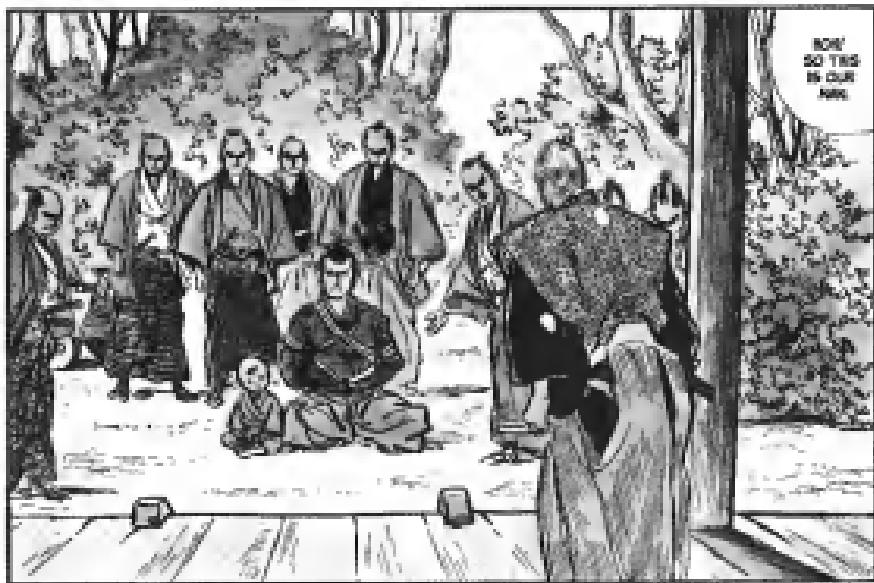
I SAW YOU  
RECOGNISE THE  
MILITARY SCHOOL  
NINJU-KURE EYE ATTACK  
AND MANAGED TO PROTECT  
YOUR SOUL EYES  
IN THE  
IMPERIAL...

AND YOUR  
ABILITY IN  
LEAPING FROM THAT  
SUBWAY CAR,  
ALSO MOST  
PROFOUNDLY,  
BUT NOW,  
IT'S OVER.



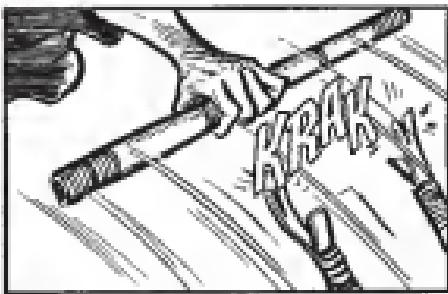


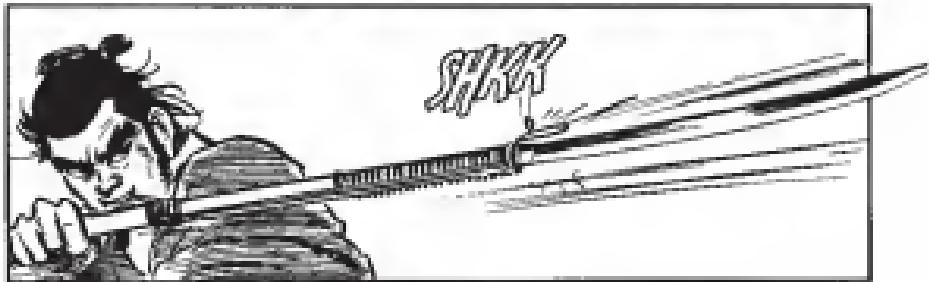


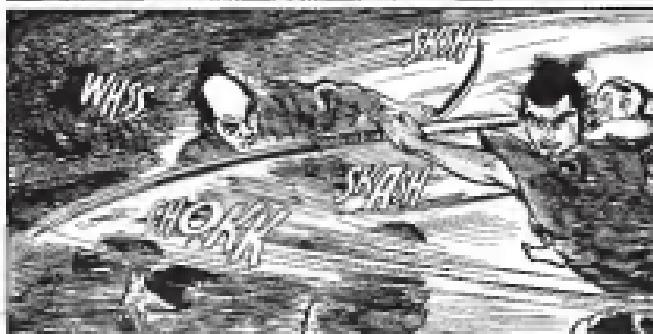


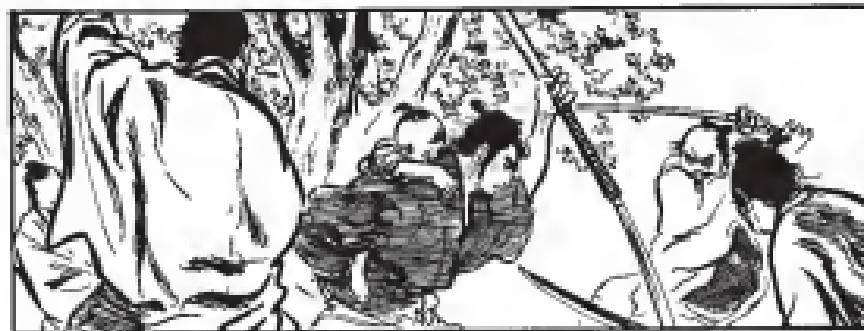
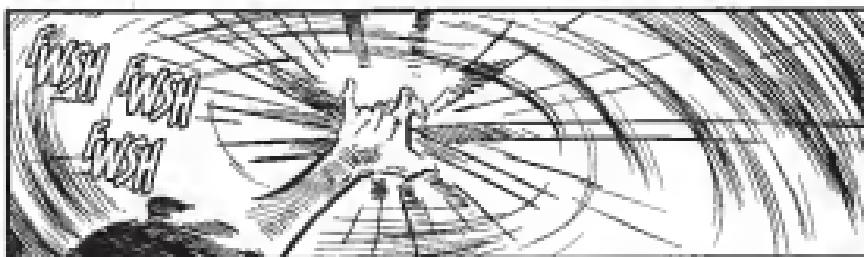






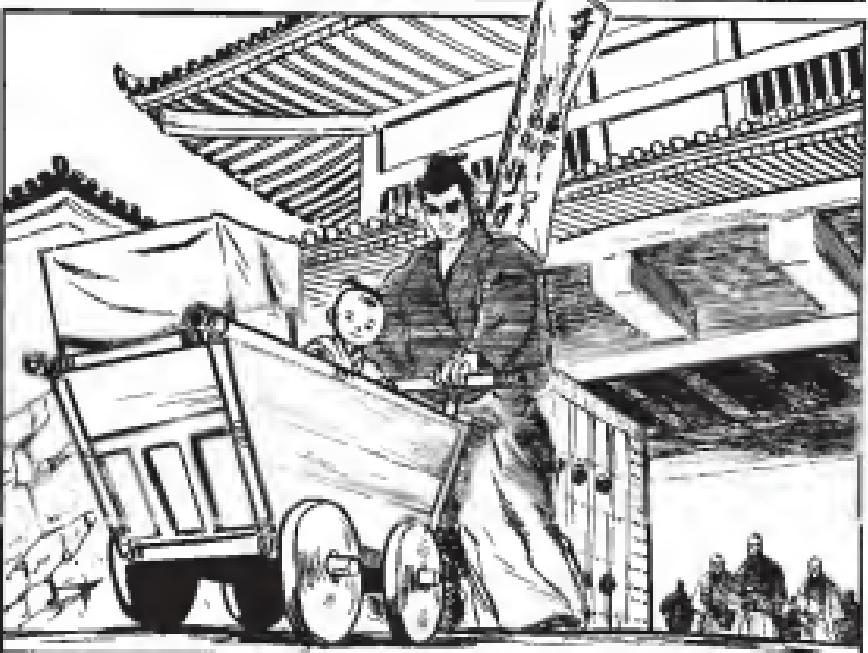












MAMA... THE FLESH REMAINING  
OF SHIGEMI... NOW AT LAST, I  
UNDERSTAND... REVEAL YOUR SECRETS  
TO YOUR ENEMY, BECOME THEIR  
PRISONER TO EATEN INTO THEIR  
ABOVE SKIN, THAT HORRIFIC  
ZONE OF INATOR.

TO PLAN SO  
PERFECTLY...

H - MY LORESDEN!  
IF WE LOST THAT  
MAN TO, WE COULD  
EXPLODE TO ALL  
OUR ENEMY FIELD.

DO YOU  
OBSERVE THE  
END OF THE  
KUROKAWA  
SHINT?

THIS IS  
NOT A MAN  
WE CAN TAKE  
ARMED AGAINST  
AND HOPE TO  
PREDATE.

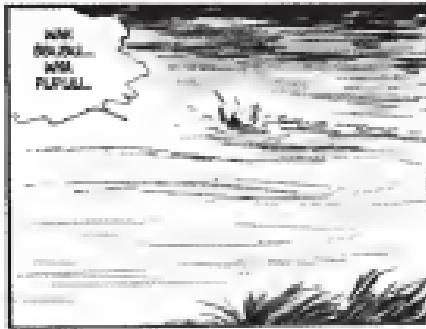
FEAR HIS  
WRATH, THE  
WRAUTH OF LONG  
HOLE AND CURE,  
ASSASSIN.

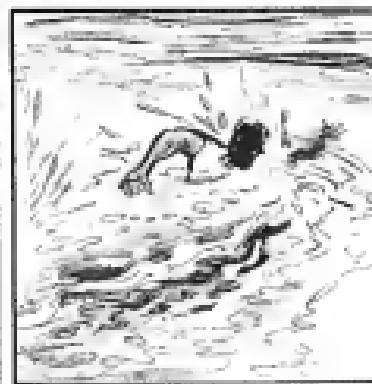
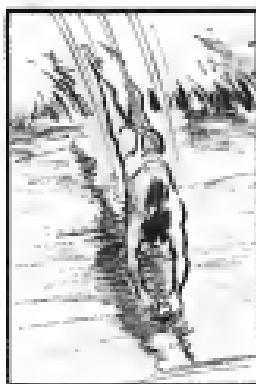


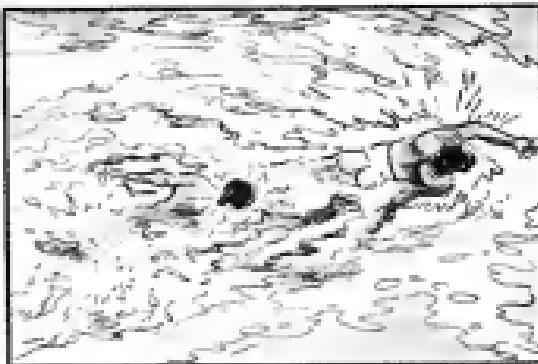
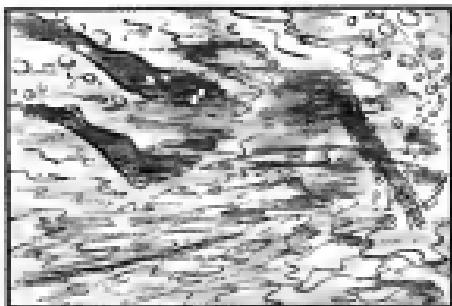


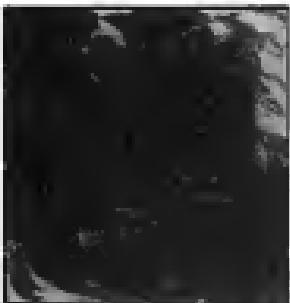


the second  
**A Father  
Knows  
His  
Child's  
Heart,  
as Only  
a Child  
Can Know  
His  
Father's**





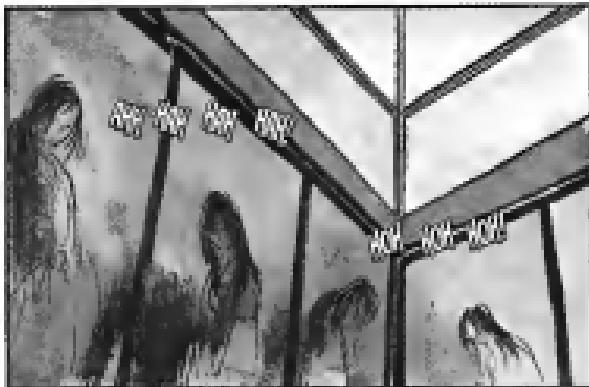


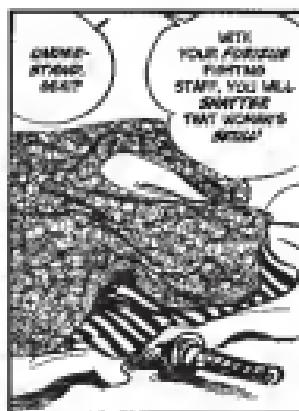
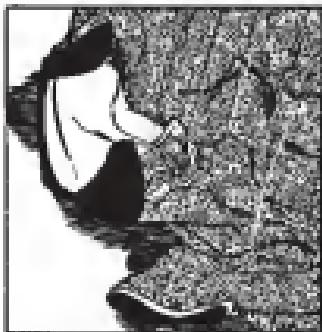


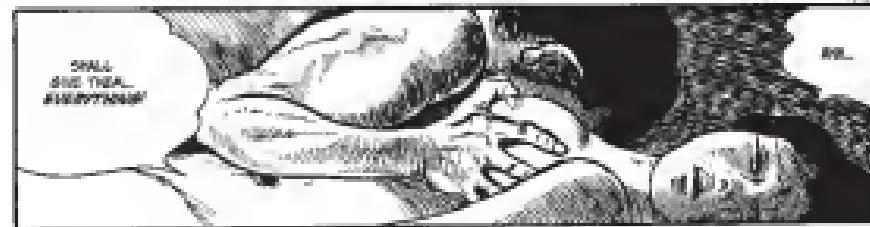
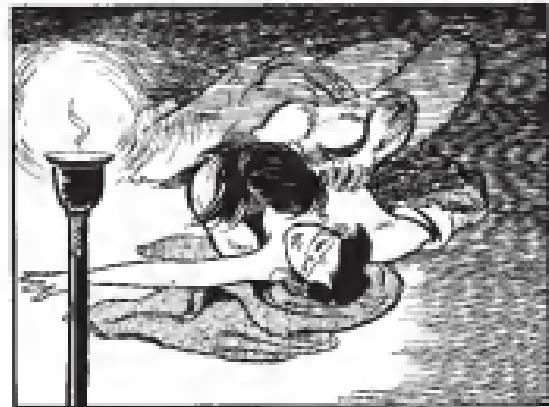


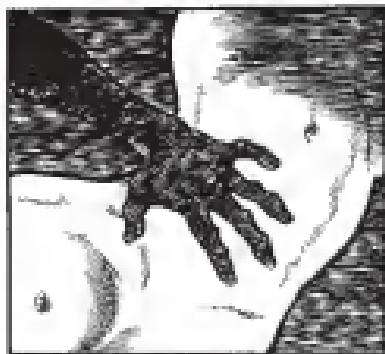








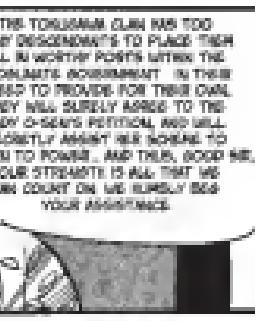
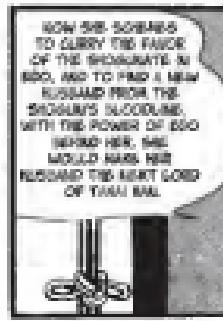
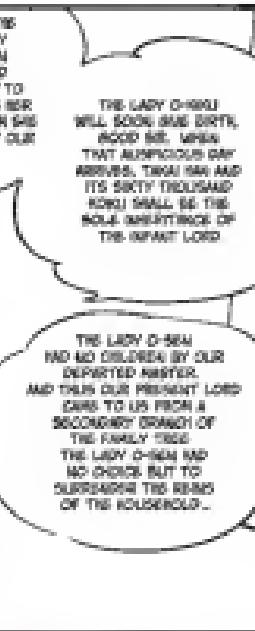
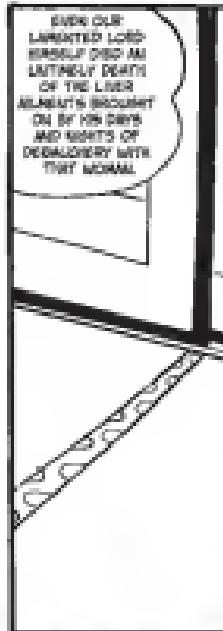
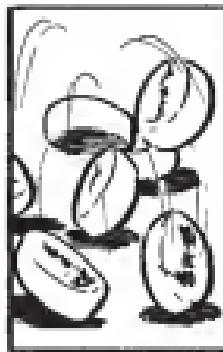


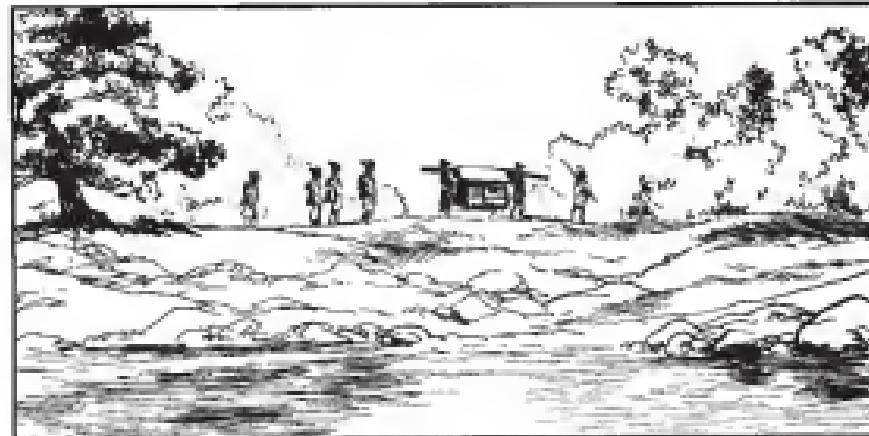
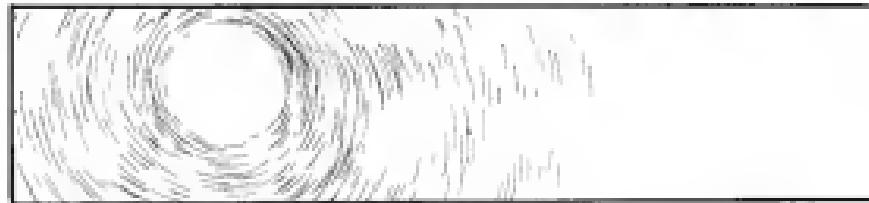


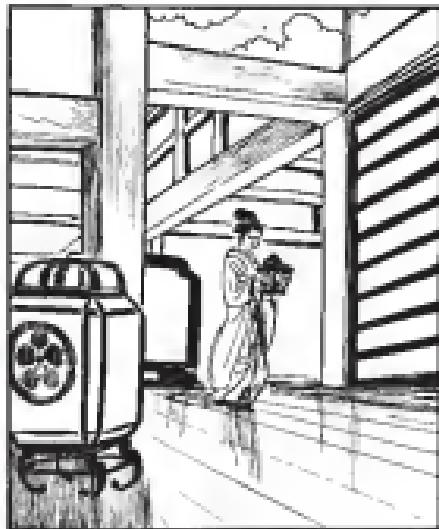
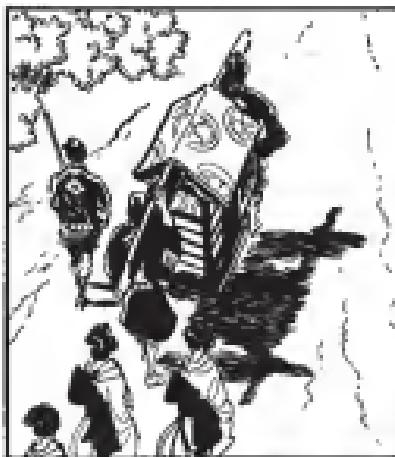


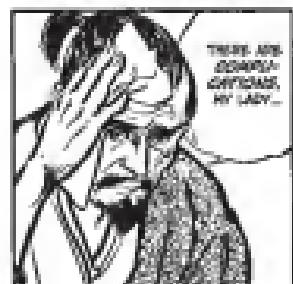
TAKI HIRA SIXTY  
THOUSAND ASANO

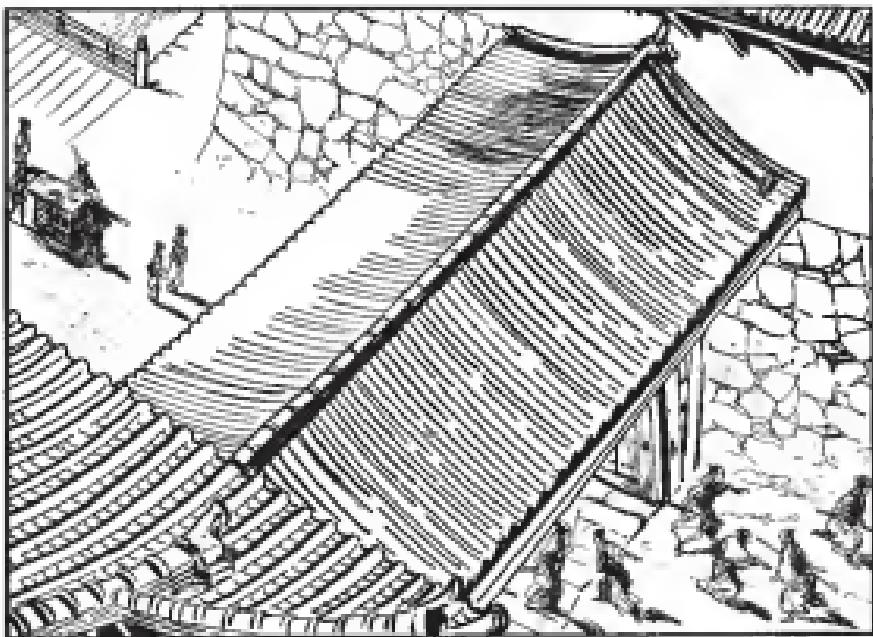


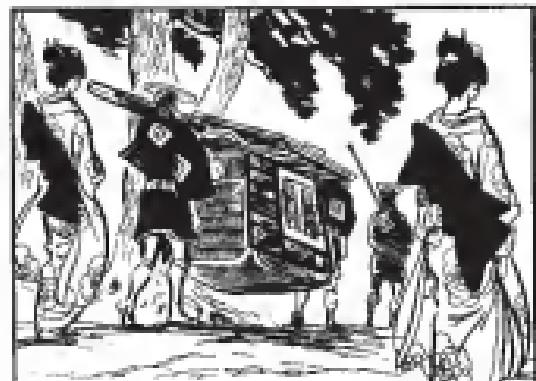
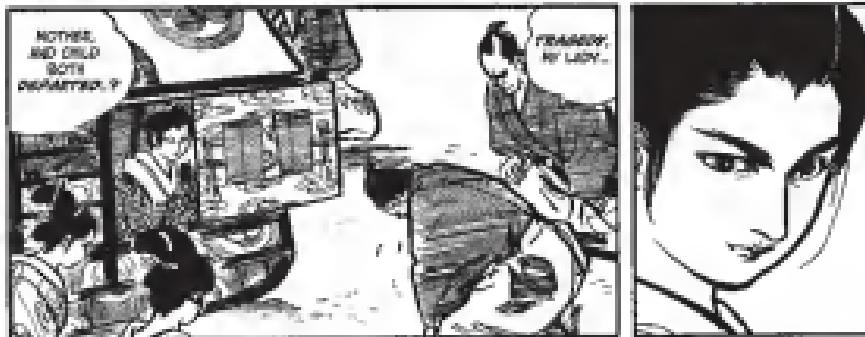




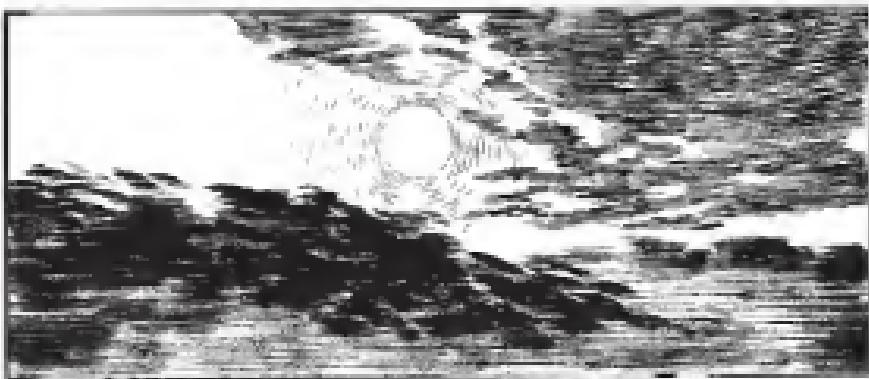


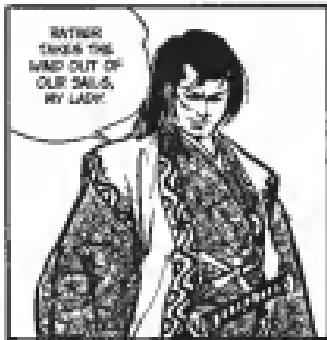


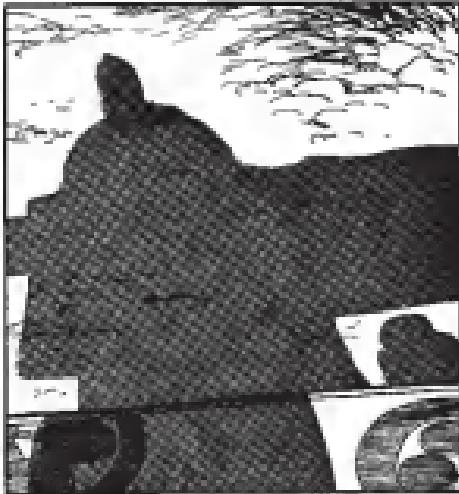
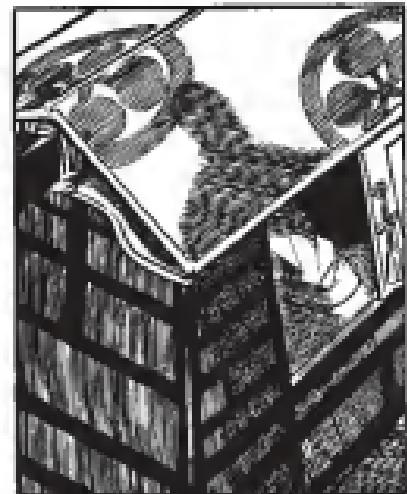
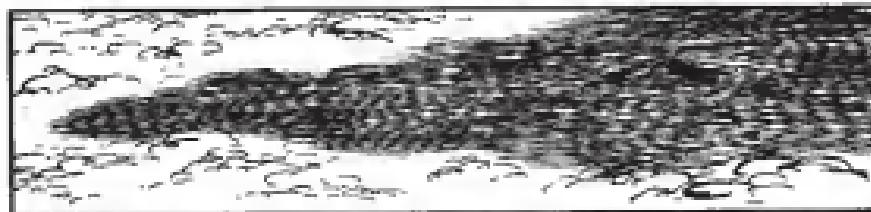


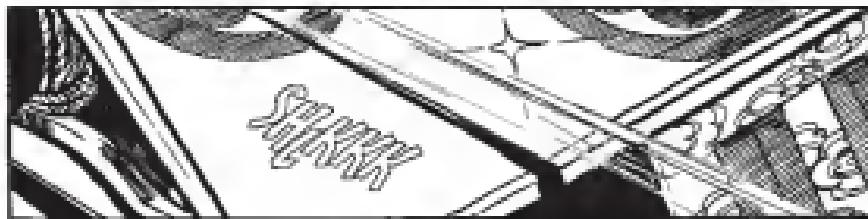
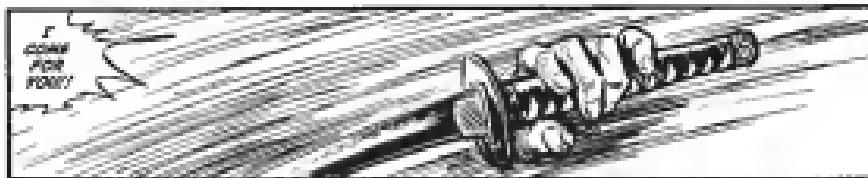


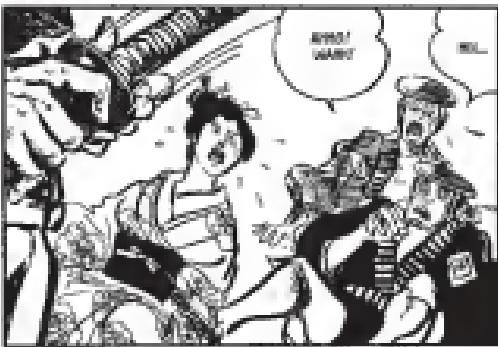


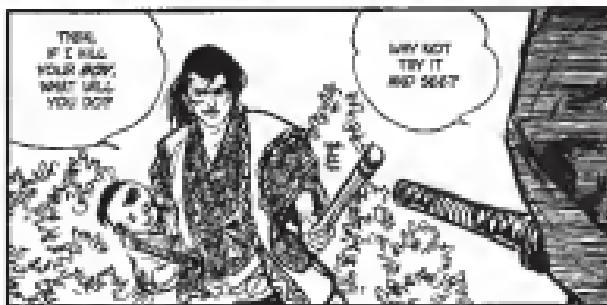


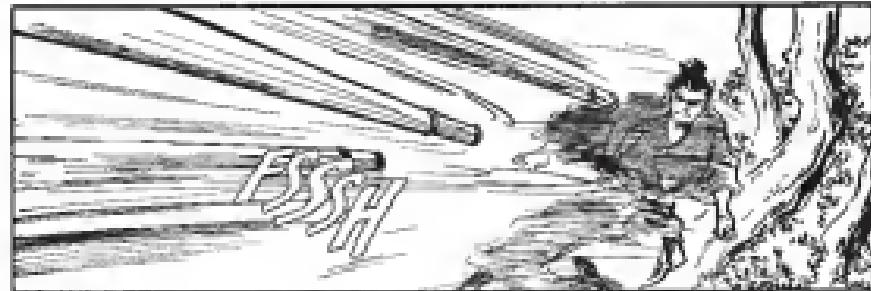
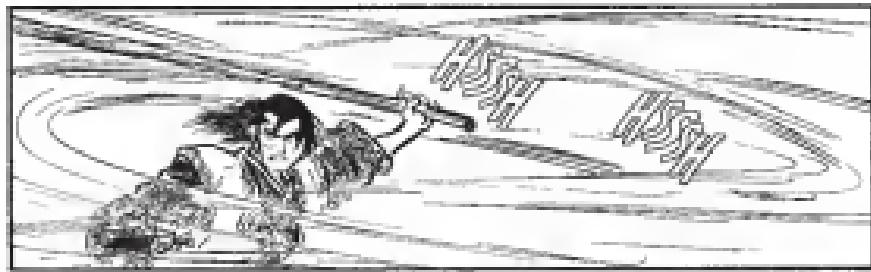
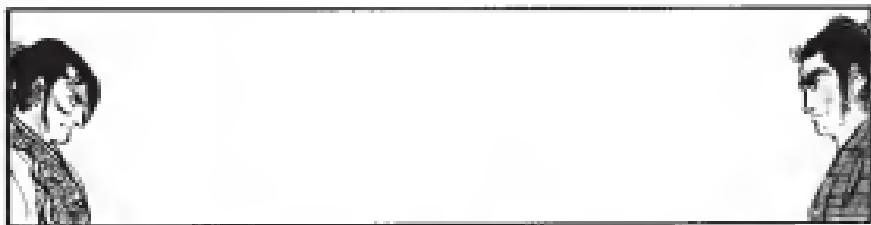


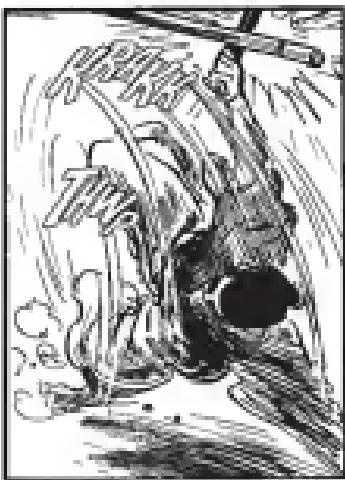
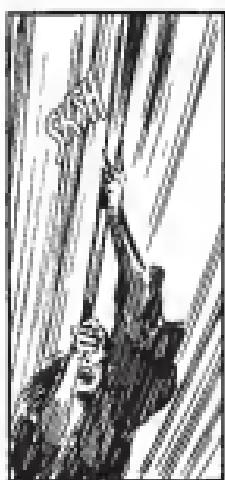


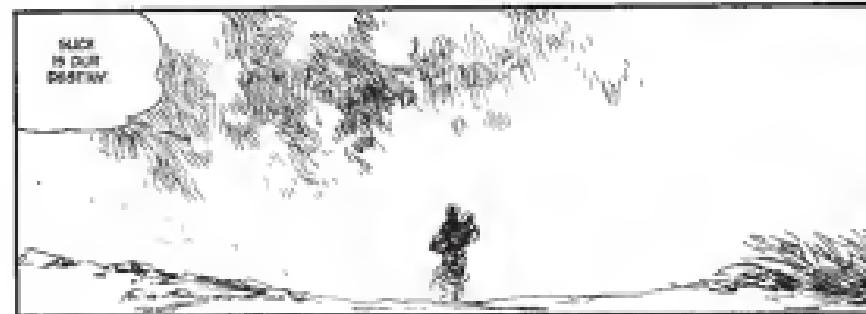














the third

From  
North  
to South,  
From  
West  
to East



WHAT'S  
AN ARMADA  
WITH A GHOST?



YES, MY LORD,  
IS ACCOMPANIED BY A YOUNG  
BOY, SOME THING WHICH IS A LITTLE  
MISCHIEVE. IT IS HIS OWN SON,  
OR THEY ARE TOGETHER FOR SOME  
OTHER REASOS, MORE CAN TELL, BECAUSE  
THE MAINTAIN HIS COUNTRY OF  
CRAVEN, ALL ARE SLAUGHTERED BY MYSTERY,  
WHAT IS MYSTERY, MY LORD, IS IN  
DEADLY SKILL. NO ONE IS EVER SEEN  
HELD TO KILL, HAS EVER ESCAPED ALIVE,  
AND THEY SAY HE LEAVES NO  
TRACE OF EXISTENCE BEHIND...



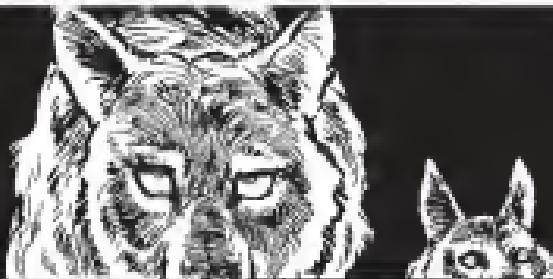
THOSE WHO ARE IN ALIEST  
REVEAL THEIR SECRETS BEFORNE  
HE WILL ACCOUNT THE DOG. YET,  
THOUGH HE COULD SLAUGHTER THEM  
AT ANY TIME, THERE IS NO EXCUSE  
THAT ANY MADE TRY TO KILL HIM  
ONCE HE HAS FINISHED HIS WORK.  
IN FACT, MY LORD, HIS SKILL IS  
SO GREAT, THEY CAN NOT TRY.  
AFTER MANY ATTEMPTS, IT WAS  
FINALLY MADE ABLE TO EXTERMINATE  
COMPLT, HE WILL BE HERE,  
MY LORD, TONIGHT,  
AT THE PRESENT HOUR...

I LEAVE IT TO YOU...  
BUT THIS GHOST  
BUSINESS, DOESN'T THAT  
DOUBBLE OUR RISK?

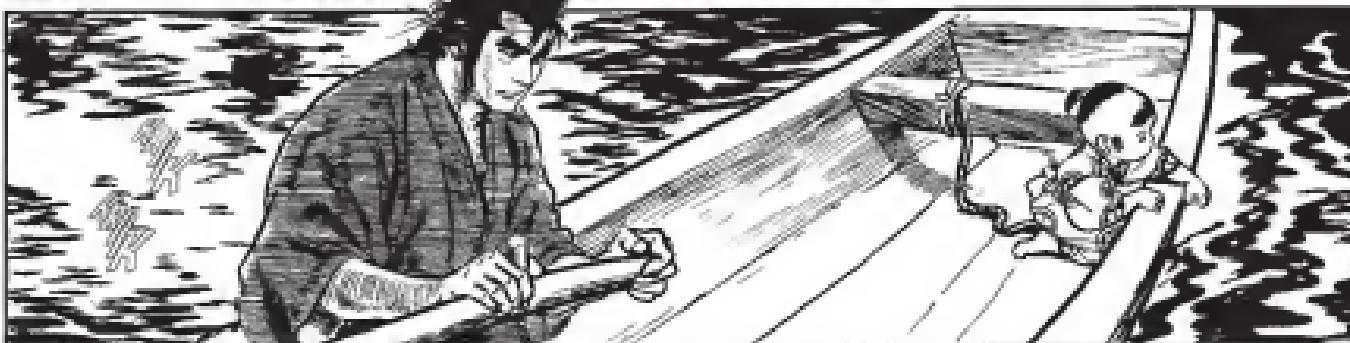


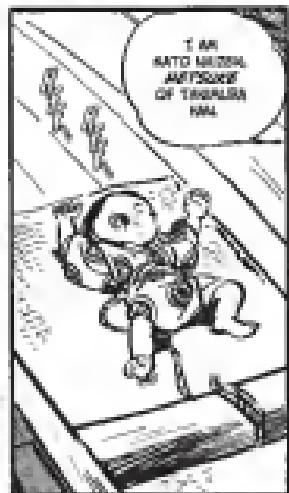
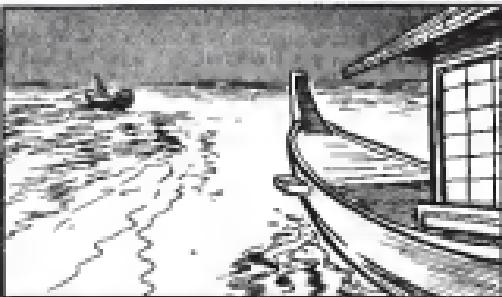
MY LORD,  
BUT HE'S IT THAT  
THE GHOST ASSASSIN  
TAKES PART IN  
THE RELEASES.

WHAT SAY YOU?



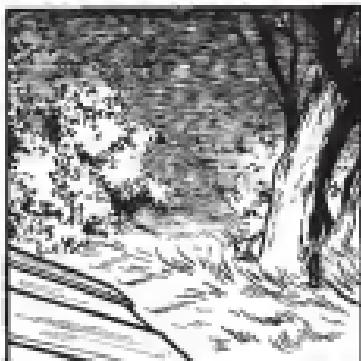
THE CHILD  
OF A WOLF,  
MY LORD,  
IS STILL  
A WOLF.











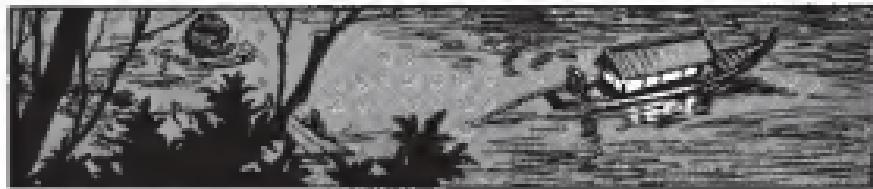
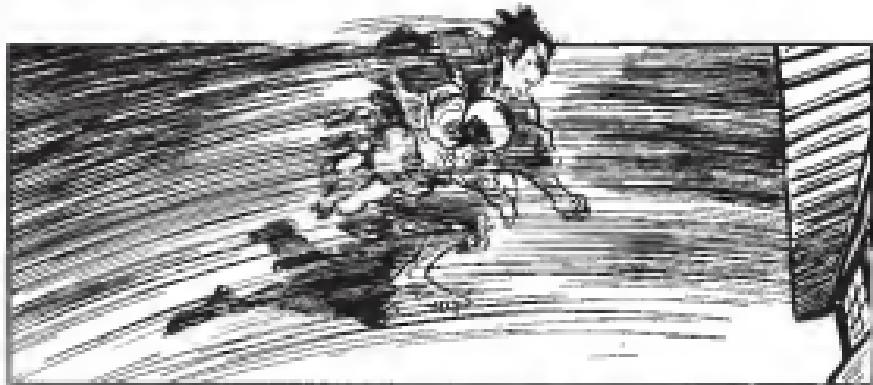
Panel 6: A man in a dark robe and hat stands in a garden, holding a sword. A speech bubble says "PAPA, WAKE..."

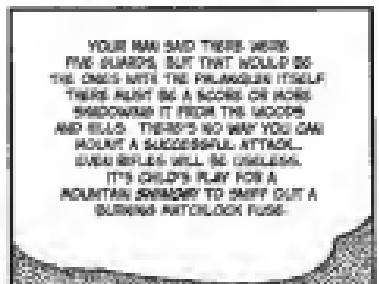
PAPA,  
WAKE...

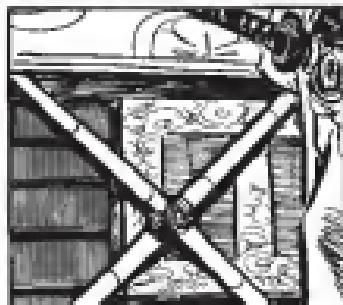
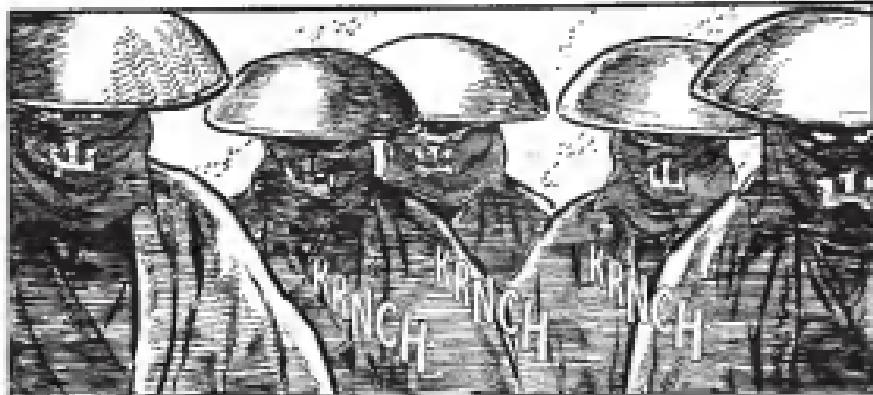


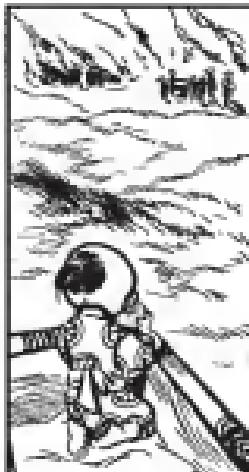


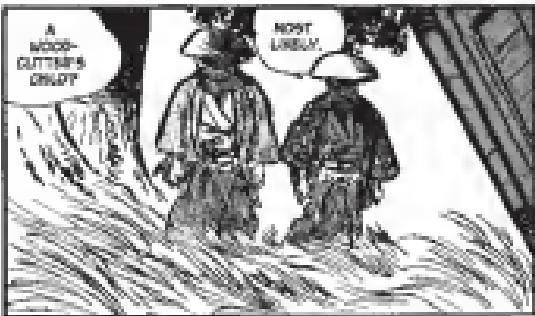






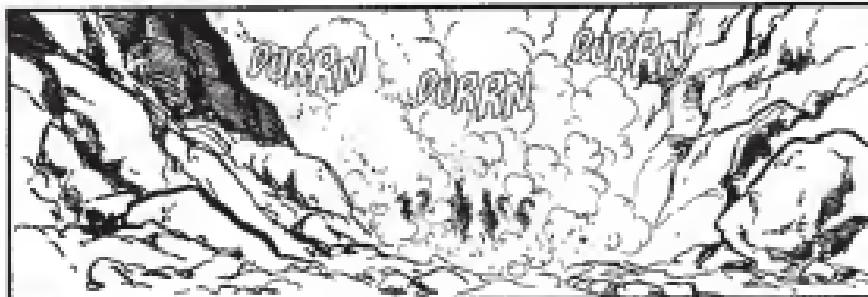
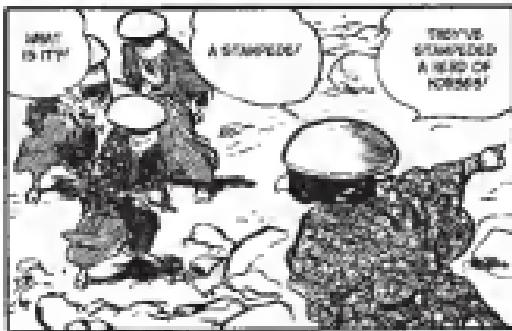


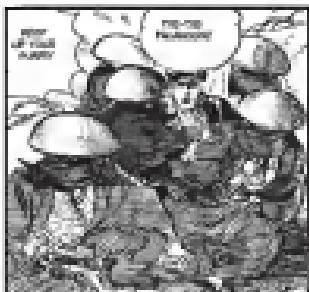


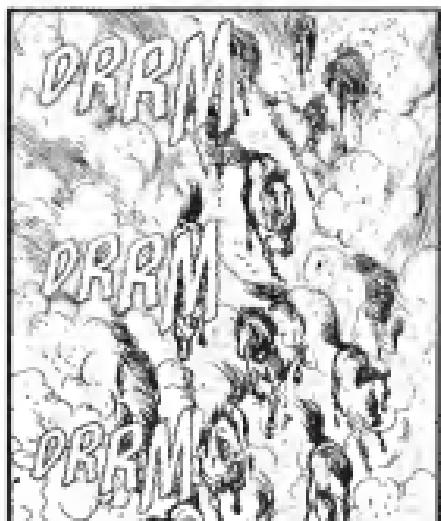


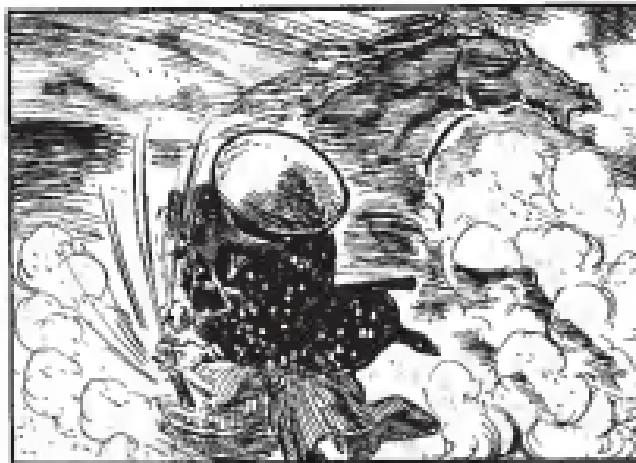


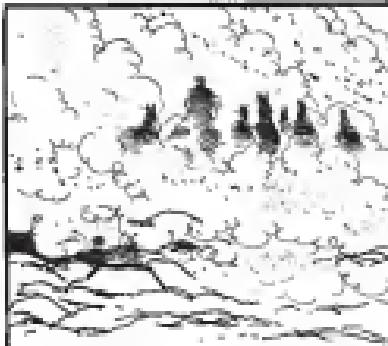
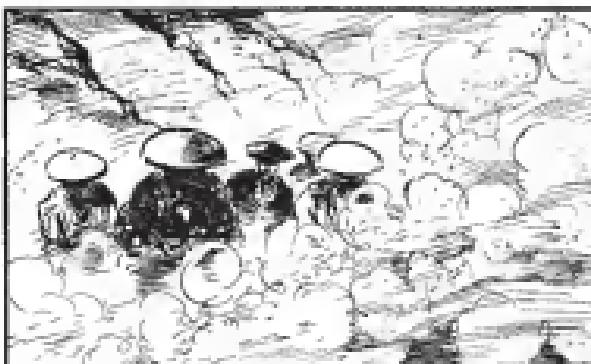


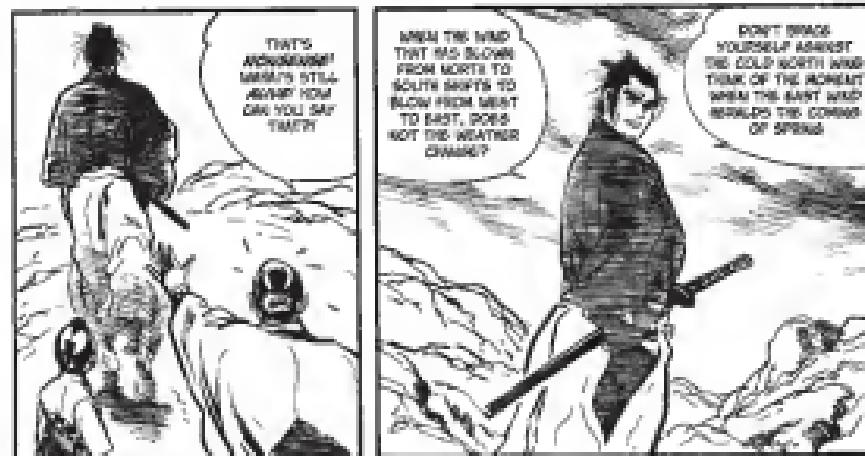
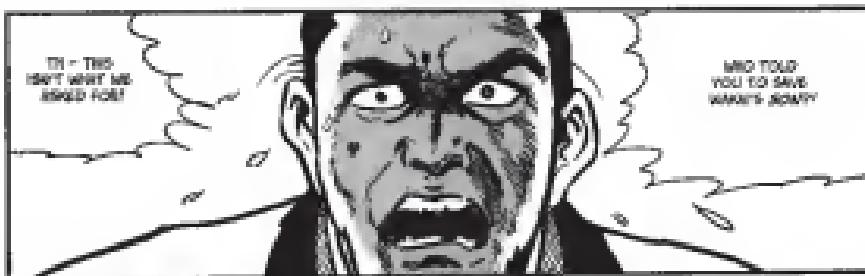








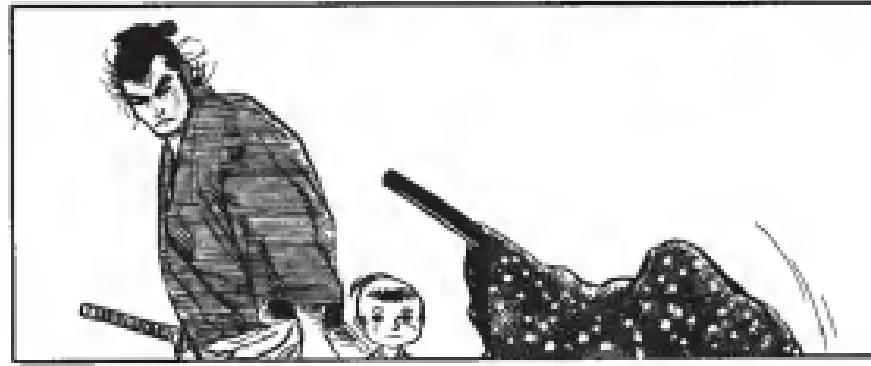
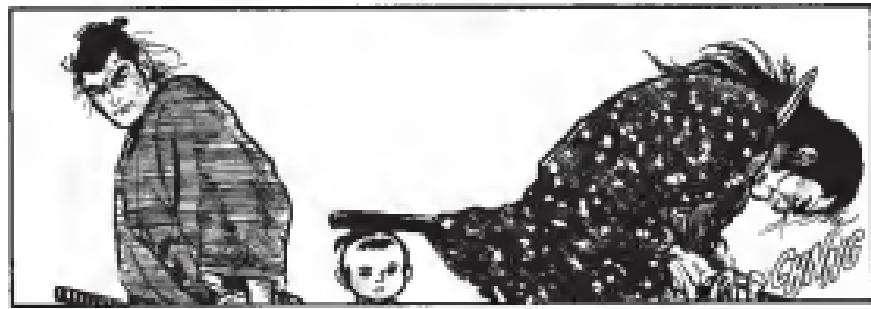








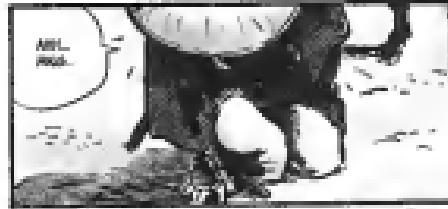




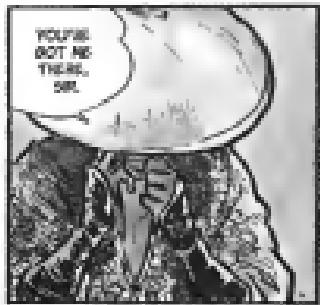


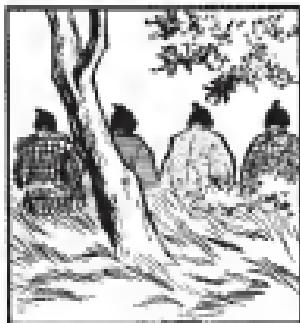
the fourth  
**Baby  
Cart  
on  
the  
River  
Styx**

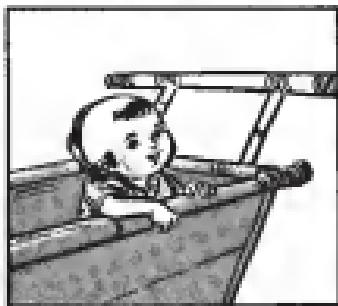
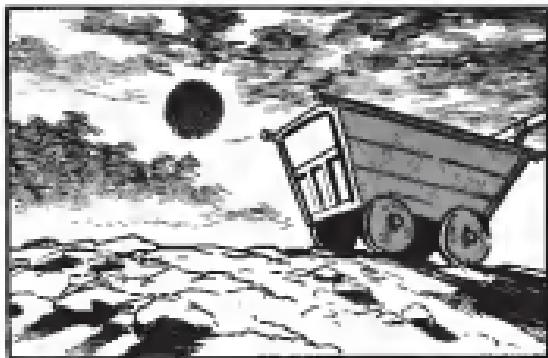






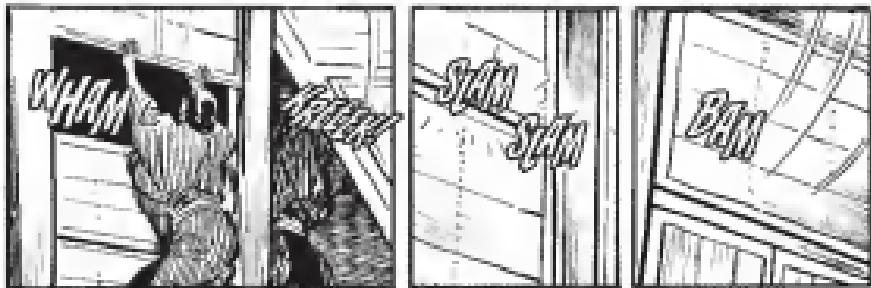


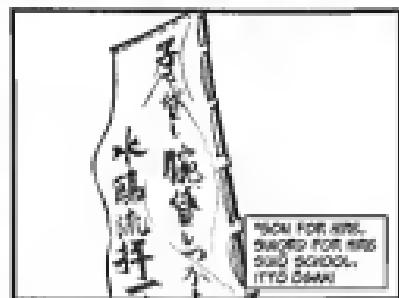
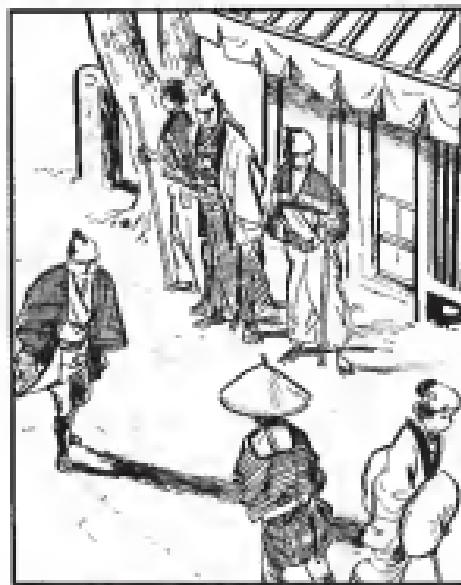




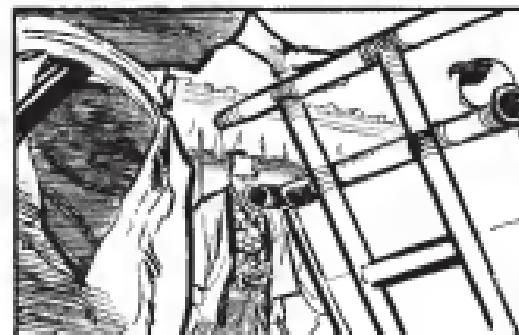








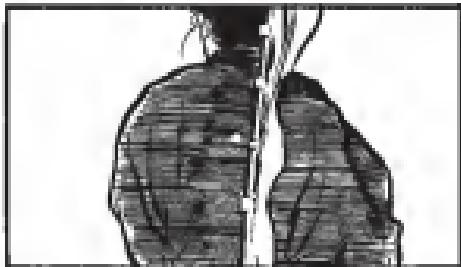
FROM FORT HIRÉ,  
DRAWN FOR HIRÉ  
SWORD SCHOOL.  
(1710 Japan)

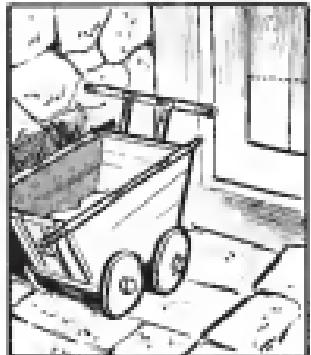


HIRÉ,  
ANOTHER  
STRONG  
SWORD

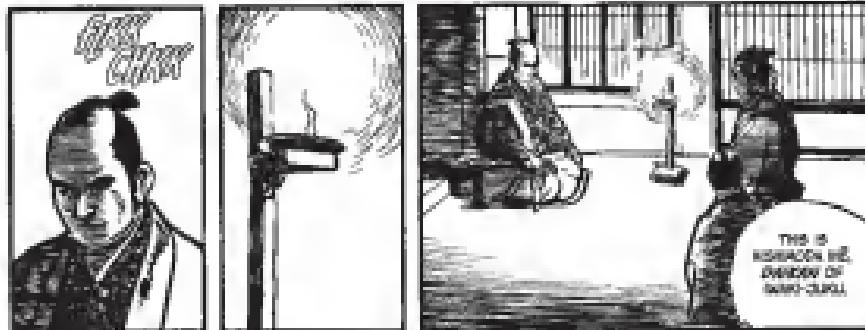
SWORD FOR  
HIRÉ... IT HAS  
NO EQUAL. IT'S  
A WOODEN  
SWORD... HE  
CAN'T  
USE IT.

WE  
TEST  
HIM, AND  
IF HE  
PASSES...

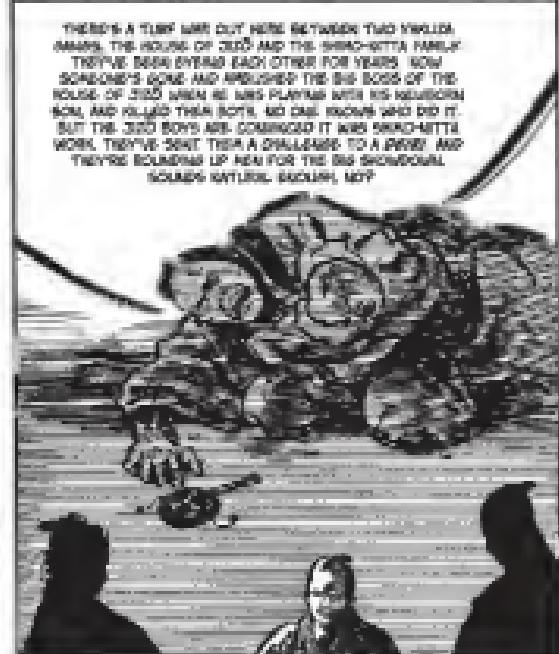
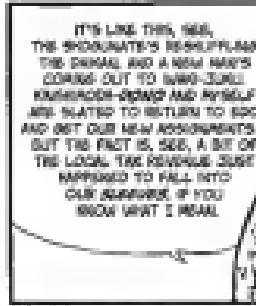


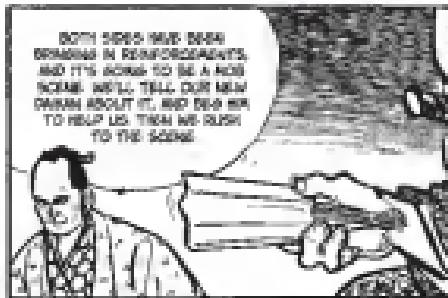








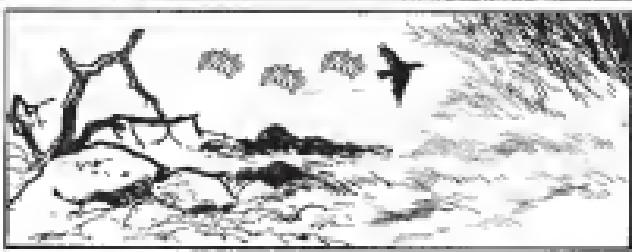


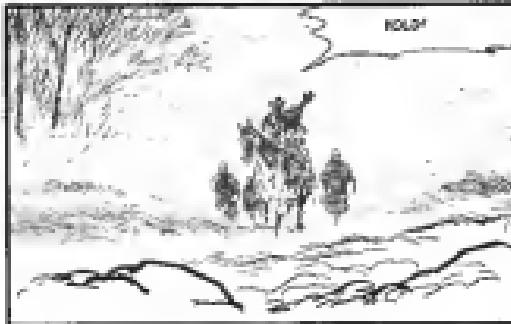


ALLOW  
ME TO DO  
ONE THING.

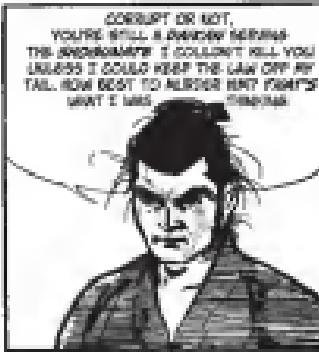
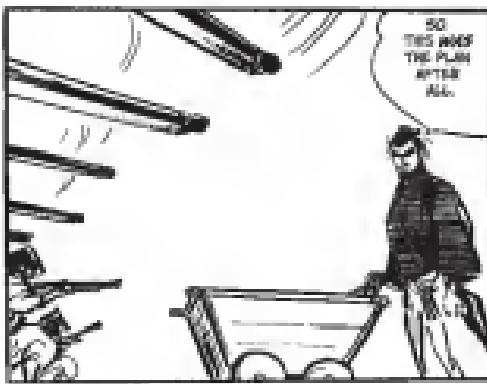


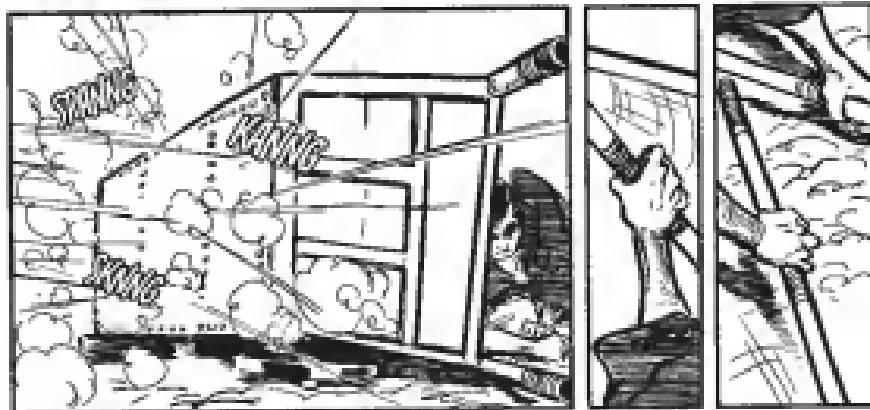
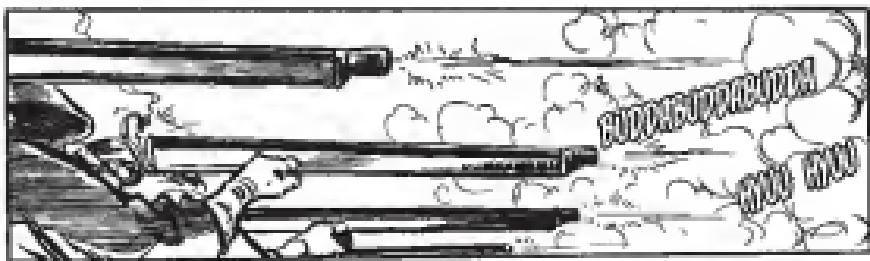
DU  
DO IT





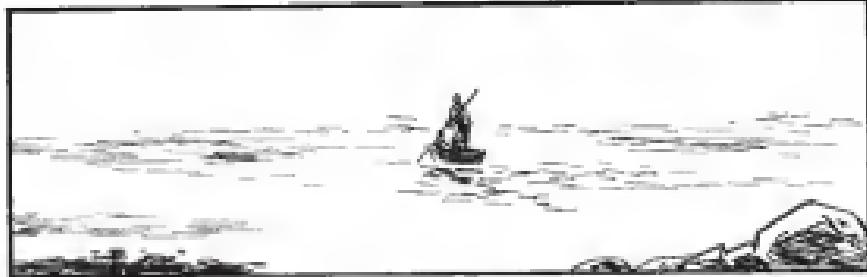














the fifth

Suiō  
School  
Zanbato





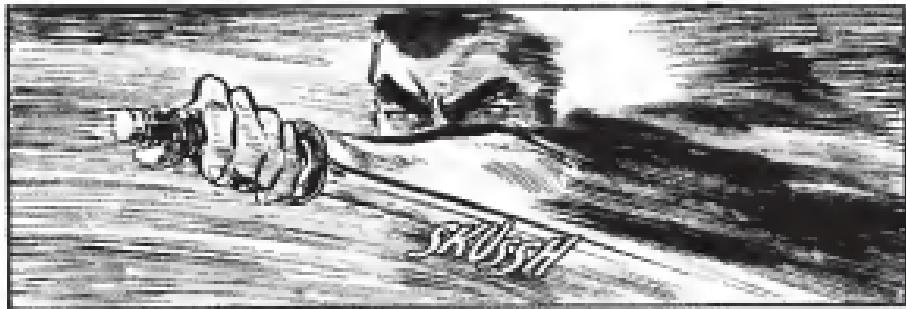


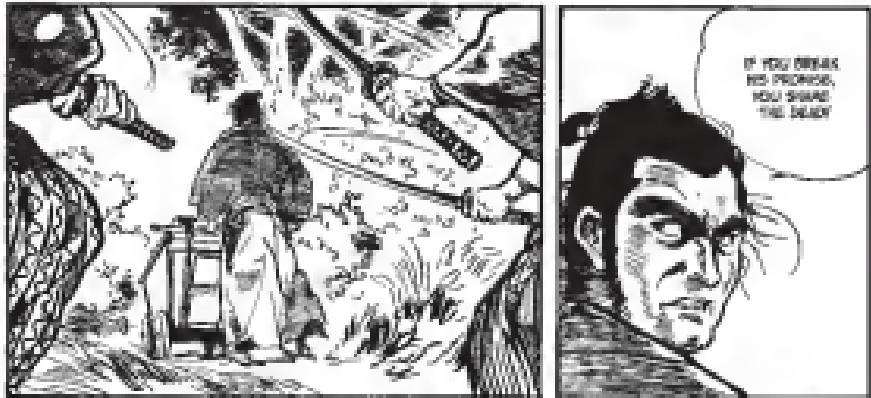
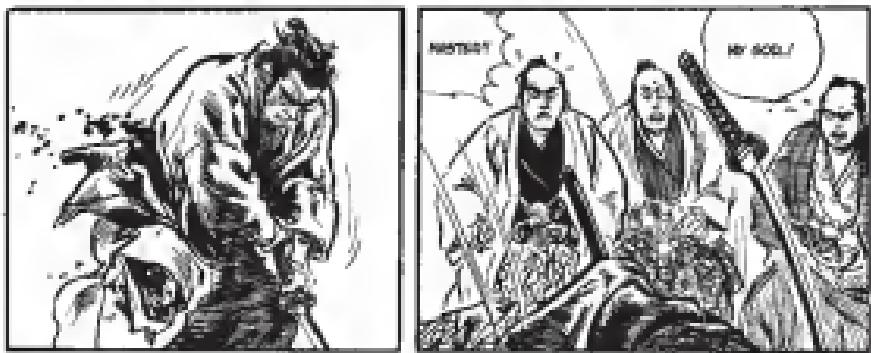




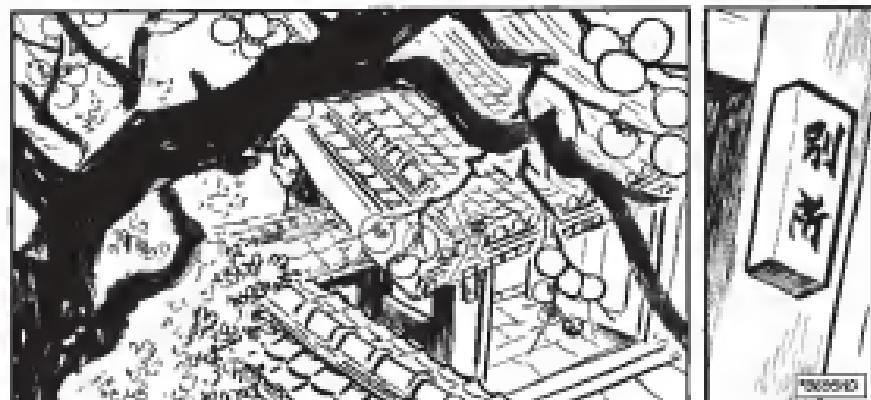




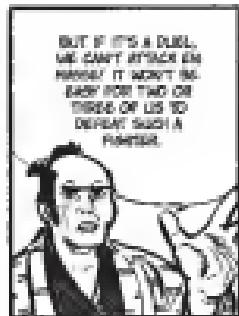




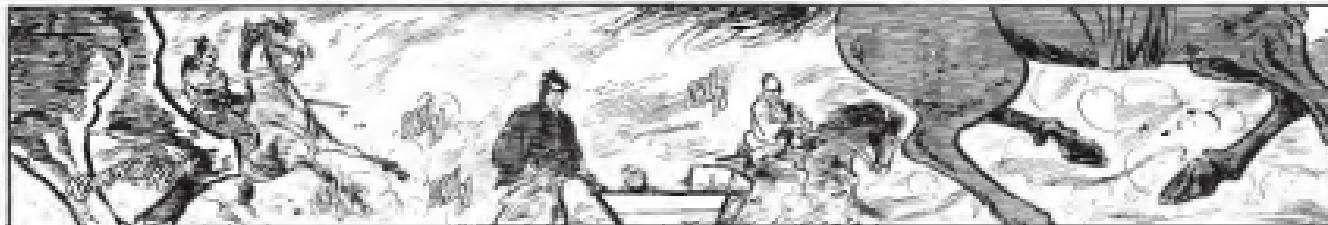




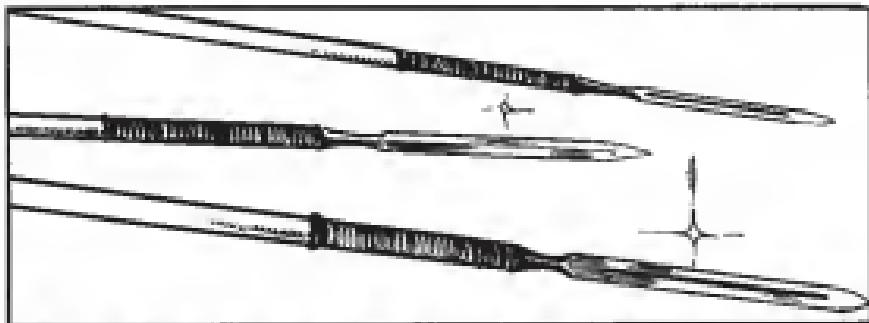




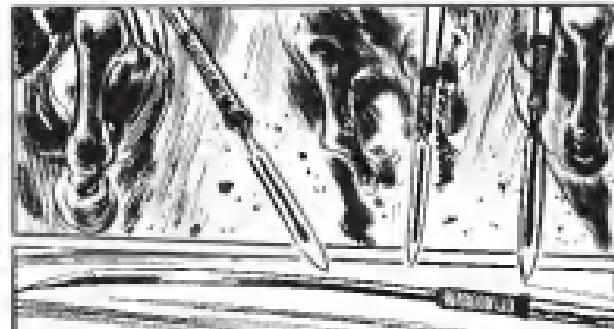


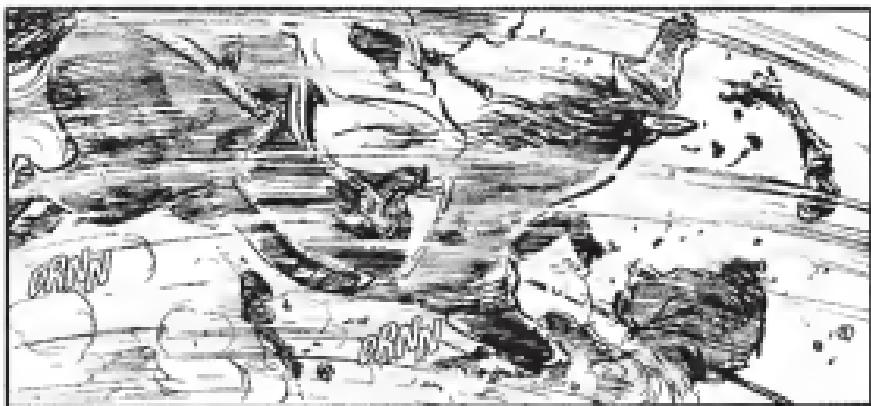


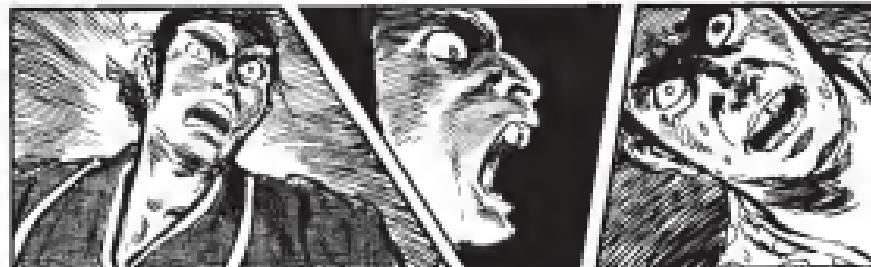
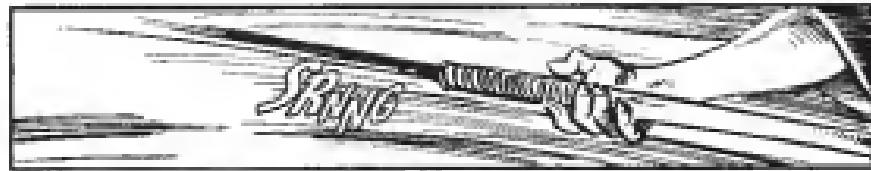


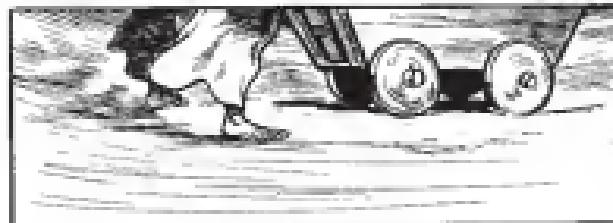
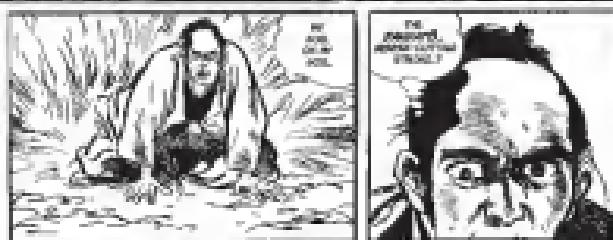


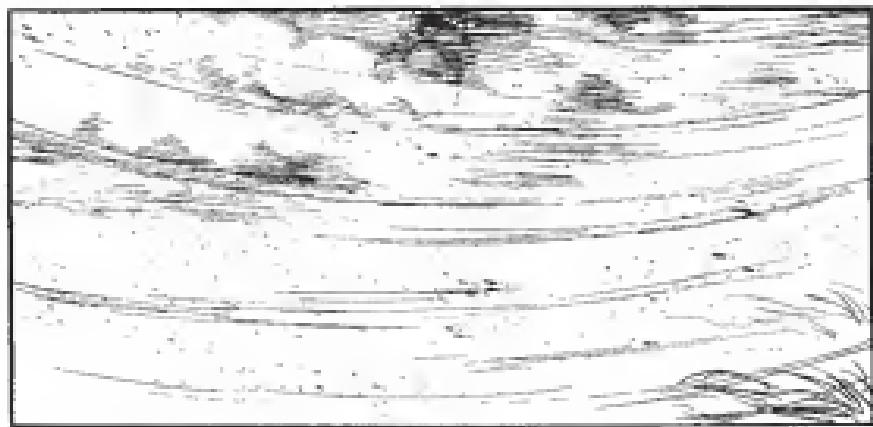
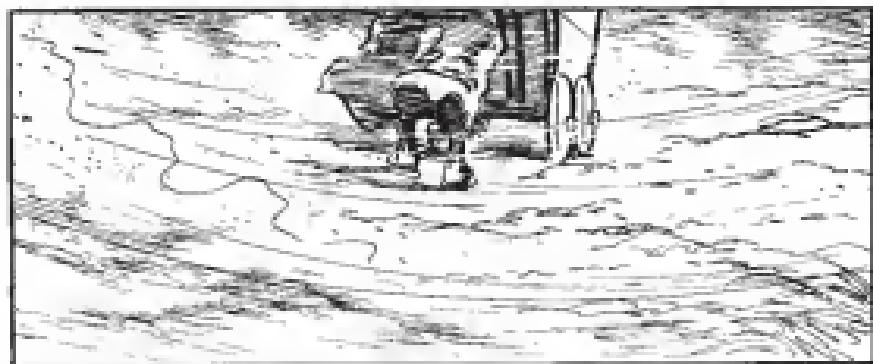
















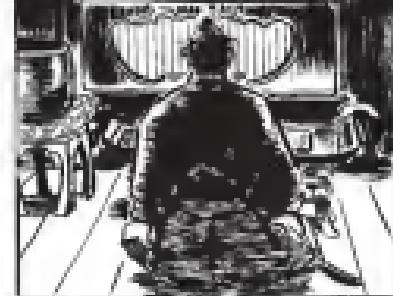
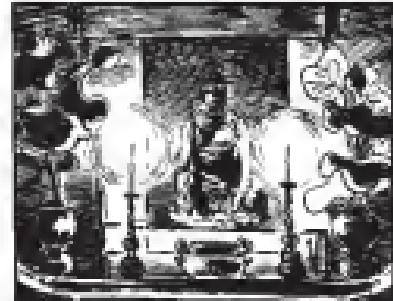
the sixth

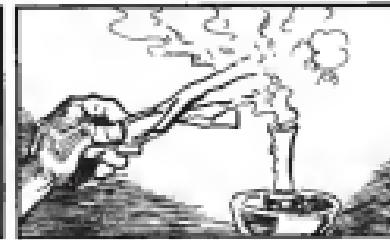
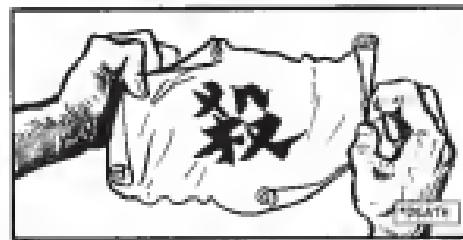
Waiting  
for  
the  
Rains

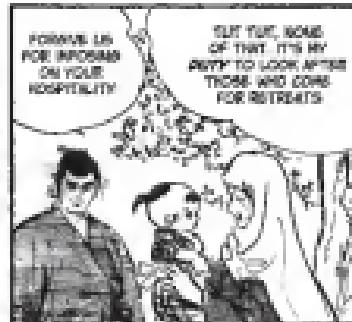
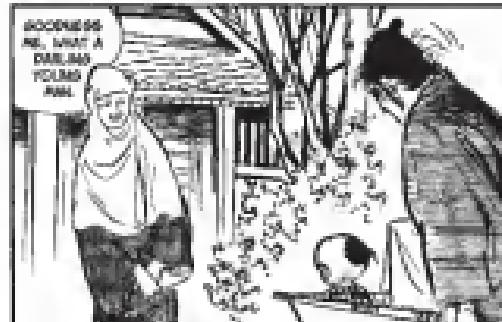
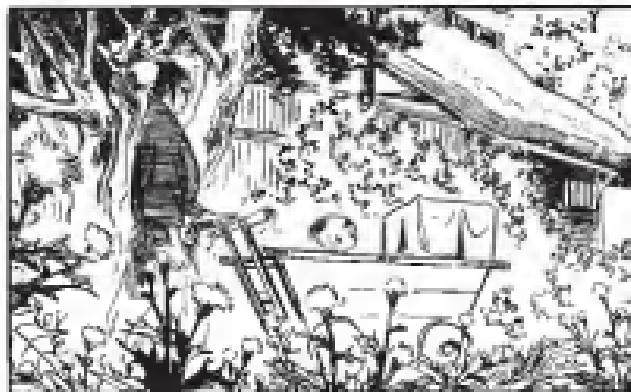
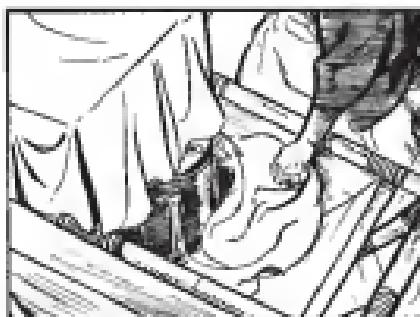


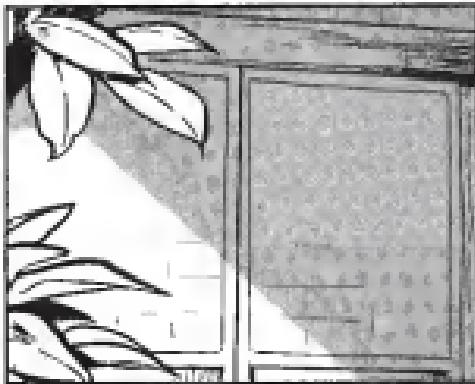


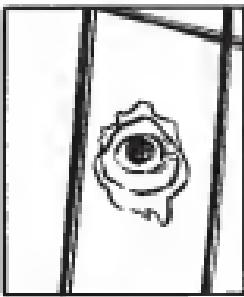
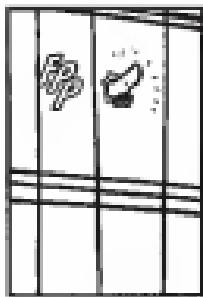


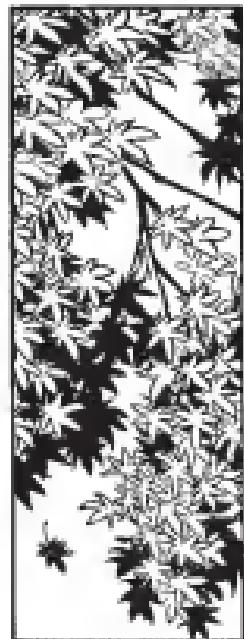
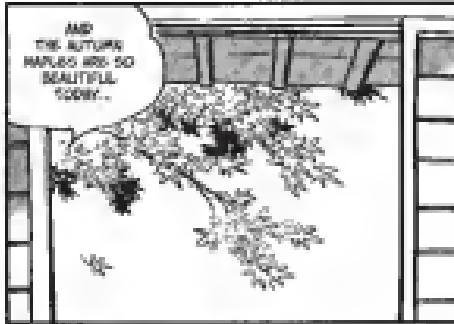




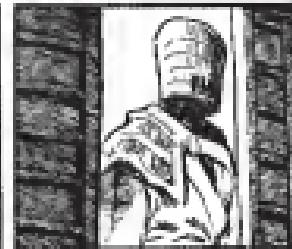


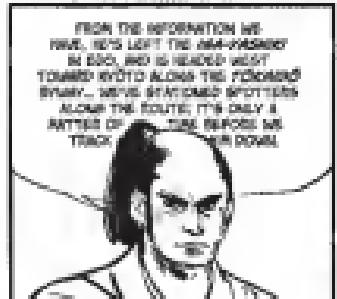












THREE YEARS SINCE OUR LORD'S CLAN AND OUR MAN WERE DISMISSED BY THE SHOGUNATE. ALL BECAUSE OF THAT MAN WE ALREADY HAVE BEEN PUNISHING HIM EVER SINCE. WITH NOTHING TO LIVE ON BUT OUR ANXIETY AT LAST WE FIND A CLUE TO HIS WHEREABOUTS AND HIS FORTUNE. AND NOW WHAT? YOU TAKE OUR MONEY, BUT YOU REFUSE TO SELL US WHAT GOOD IS THAT? WE LIVE FOR THE DAY THAT MAN IS KILLED, AND WE CAN PRESENT HIS HEAD BEFORE THE GRAVE OF OUR DEPARTED FONDLY.



THE HEAD OF THAT DESPICABLE PLOT?



HE WAS JUST A LOW-RANKING ADVISER, BUT HE MANAGED TO LEAK THE WORDS OF CHIEFTAIN SHIMIZU, AND SET HIMSELF PROMOTED TO HEAD OF MAN'S ACCOUNTANT. HE USED HIS POSITION TO STEAL ALL OUR SECRETS, AND THEN HE USED SHIMIZU-DONO TO KILL HIS ESCAPE!



THEY GOT THIS FAR BEFORE SHIMIZU FELL ILL, SO HE COULD DUMP HIS REBEL, AND FLEW TO EDO. IT WAS ALL PART OF HIS PLAN FROM THE BEGINNING! DEFEATING SHIMIZU ALLOWED HIM TO MAKE HIS ESCAPE...



WE DIDN'T KNOW UNTIL TOO LATE THAT HE WAS REALLY ONE OF THE SHOGUN'S SPYING ANARCHIST FIGHTERS. SHIMIZU AND HIS FELLOWS ARE TOO MUCH FOR US TO TAKE HIM ON ALONE...

YET HERE YOU ST. THIDDING YOUR THUMB!



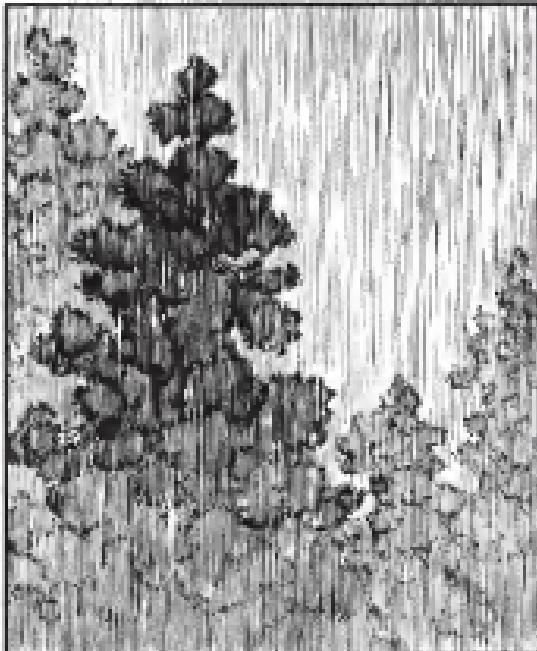
THE MAN STAYED HERE FOR SEVERAL DAYS TO TAKE CARE OF HIS ALIEN WIFE.

DOESN'T THAT TAKE A LONG TIME FOR A MAN WHO HAS ALREADY COMPLETED HIS ASSASSIN?

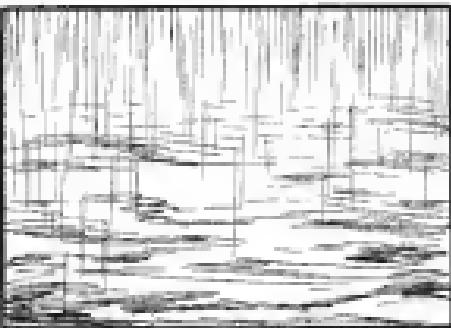
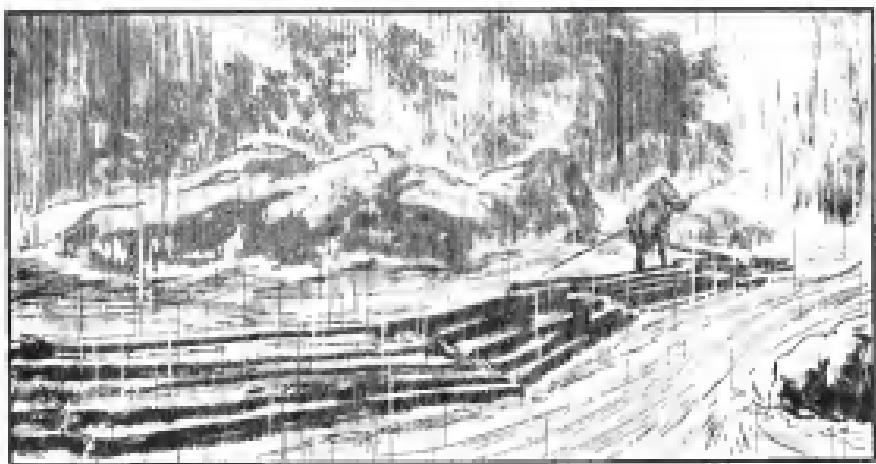
ARE YOU SUGGESTING HE LOVED HER?

AHURST! YOU DON'T KNOW OF WHAT YOU SPEAK!

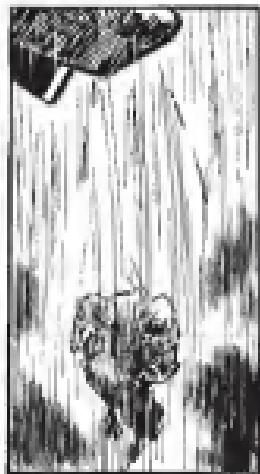


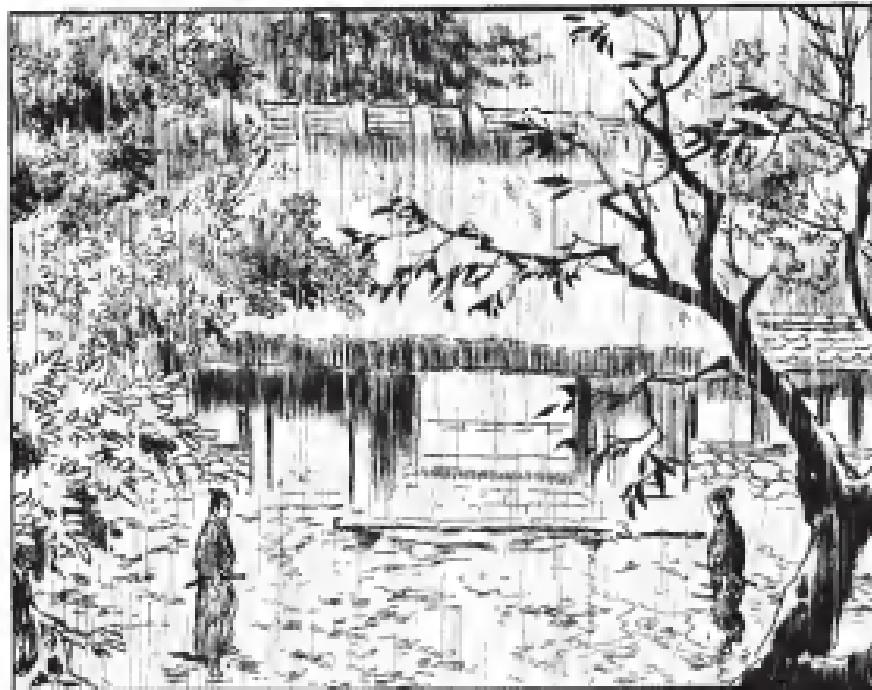


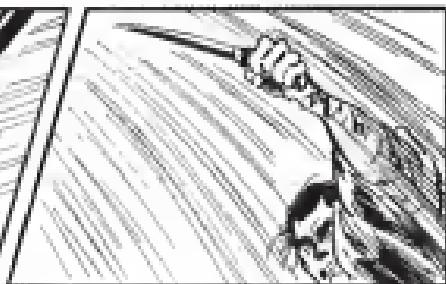
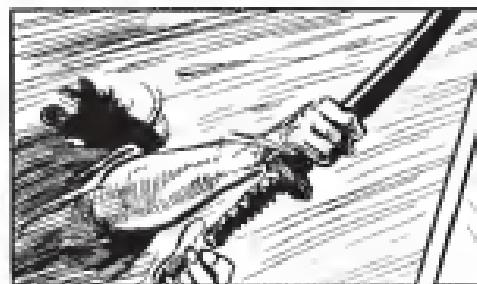


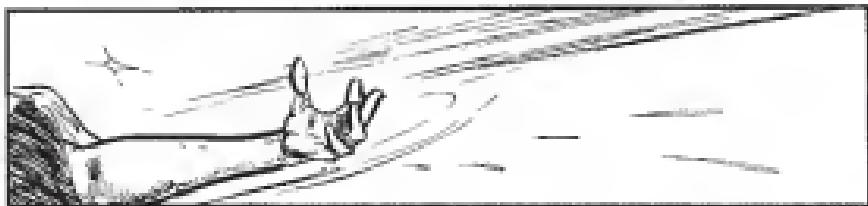








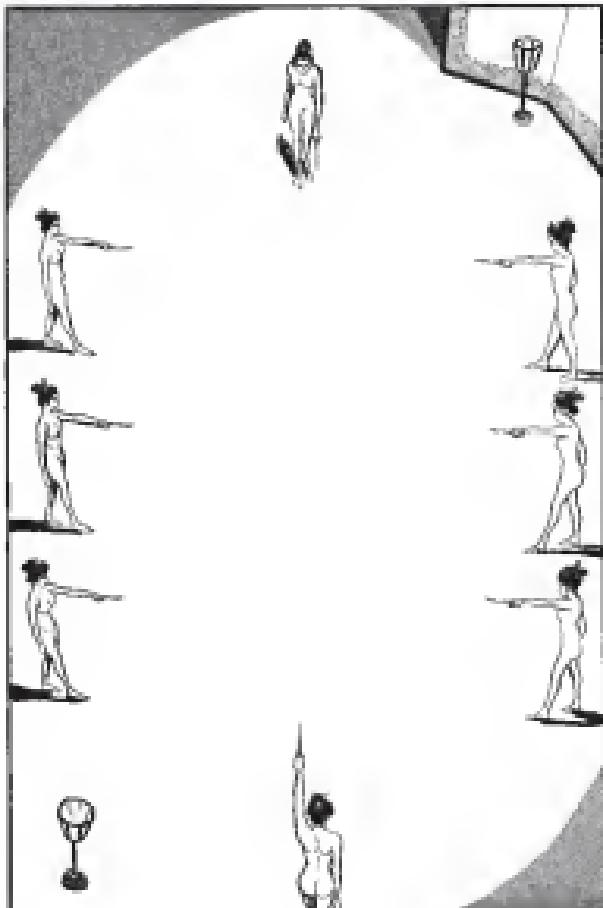


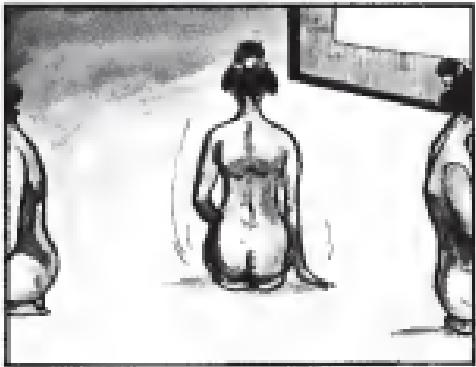
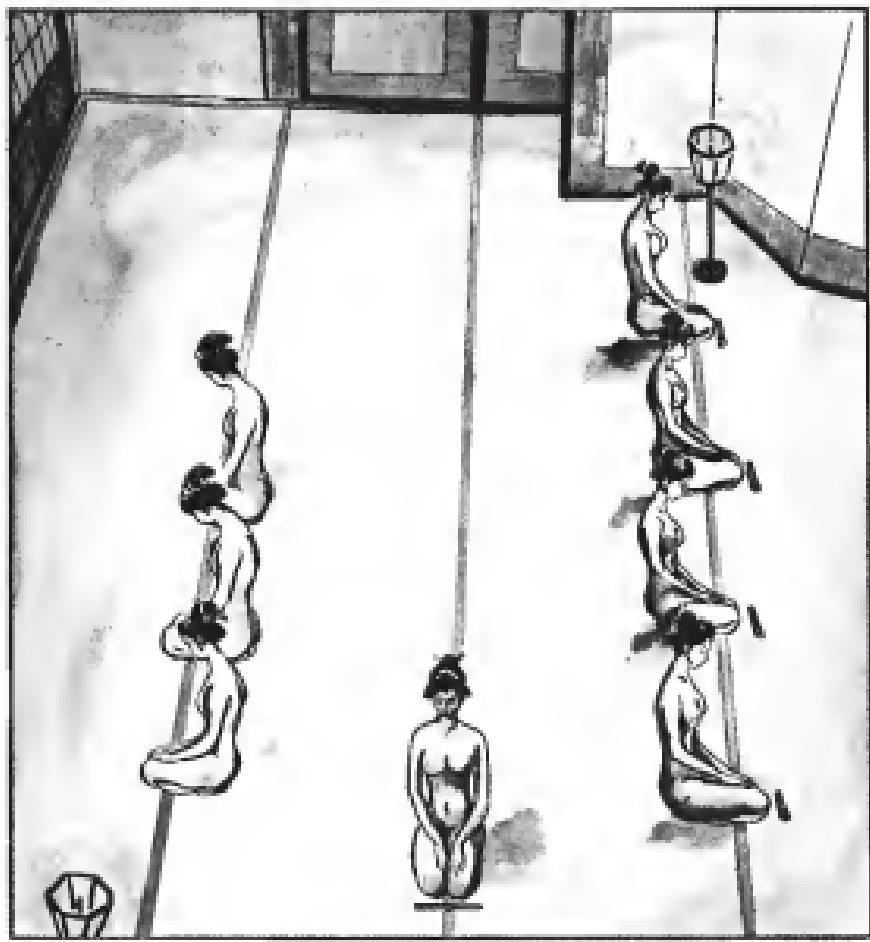


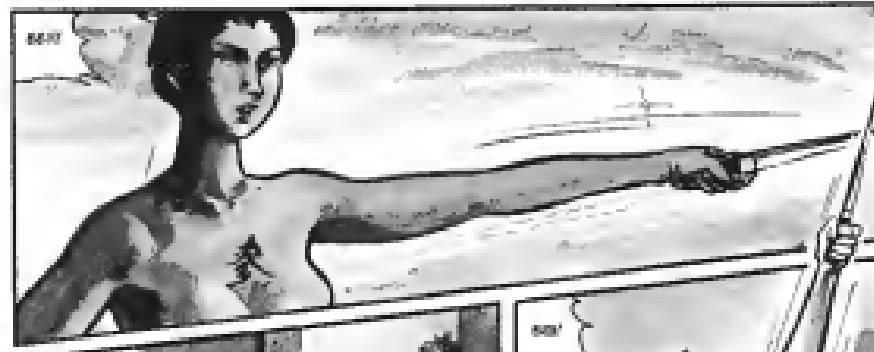


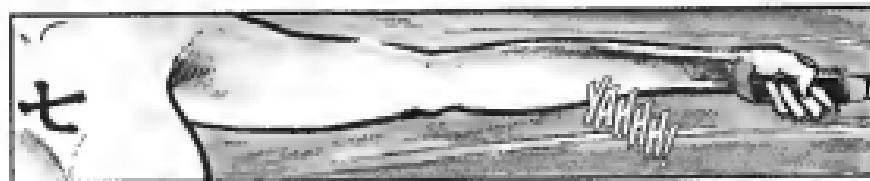
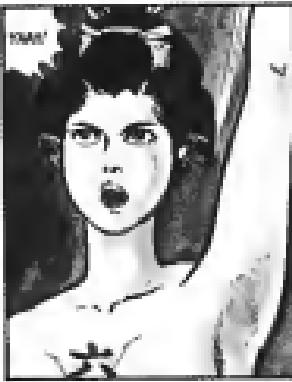
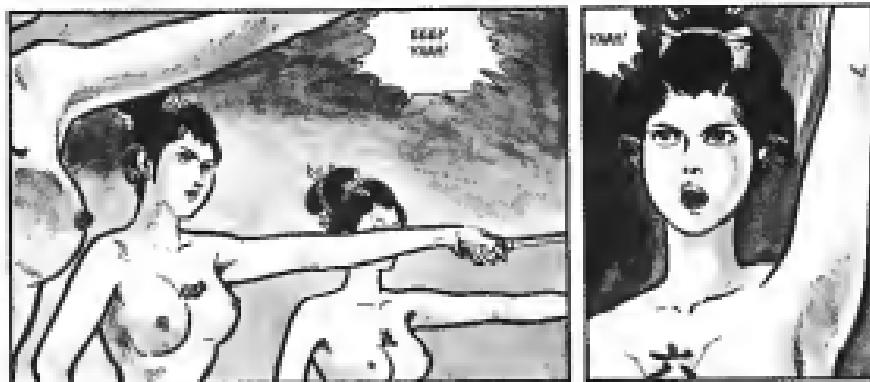
the seventh

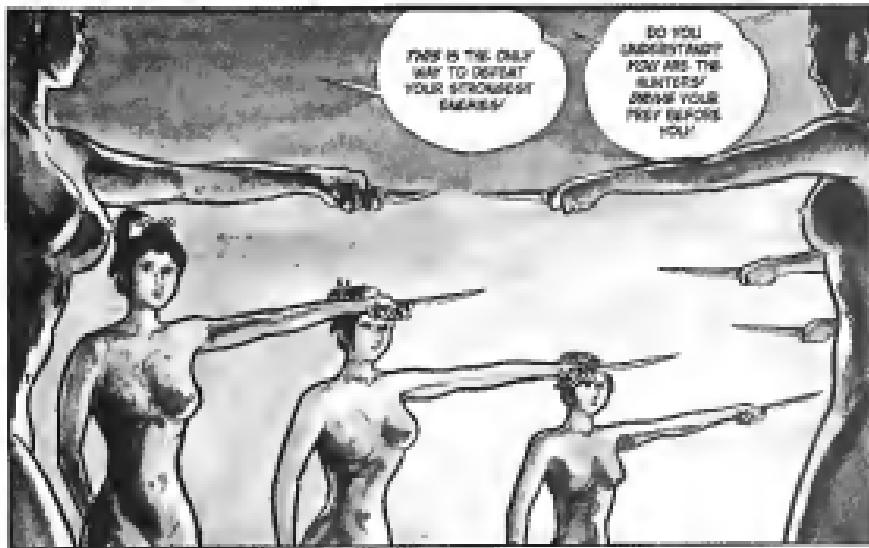
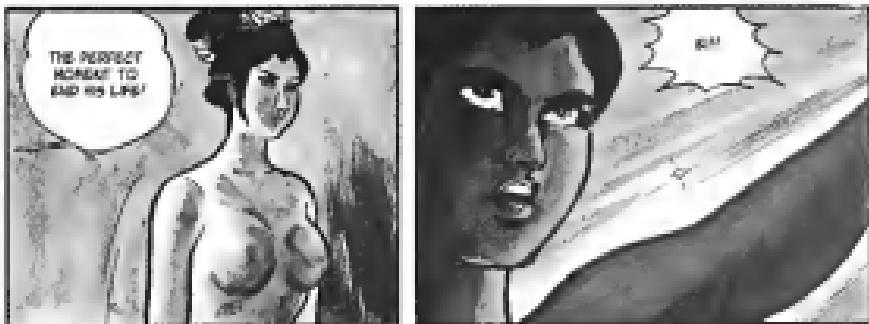
# Eight Gates of Deceit



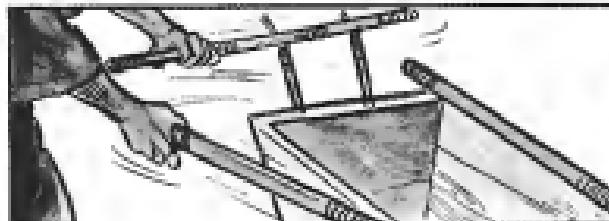


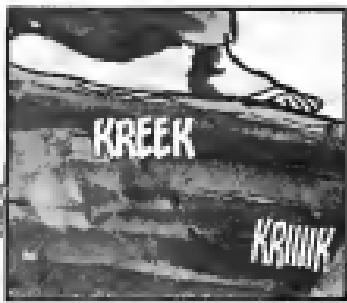


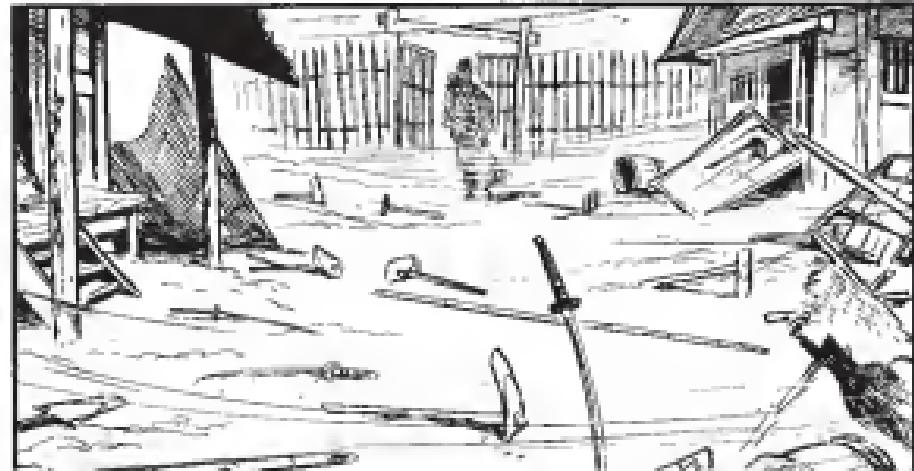
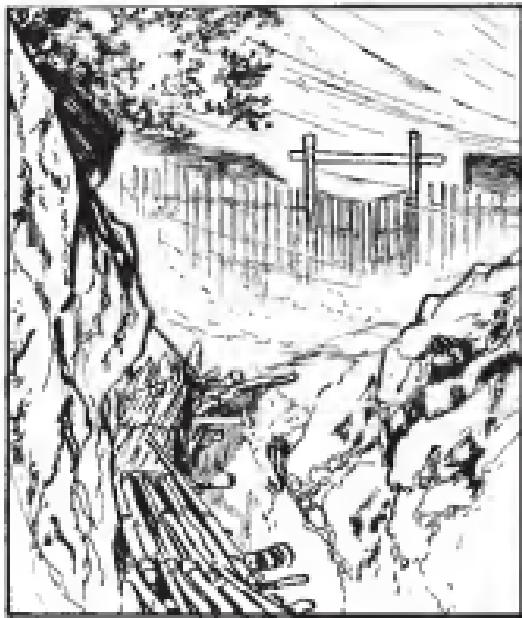


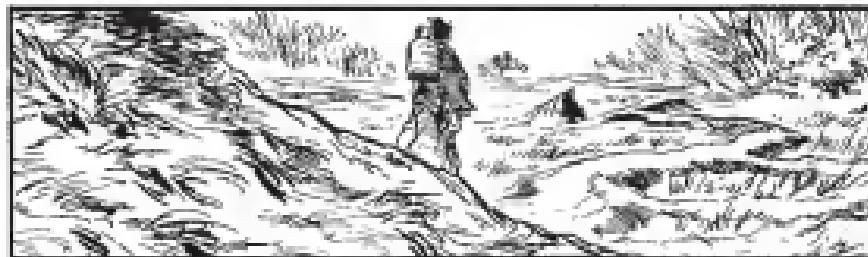


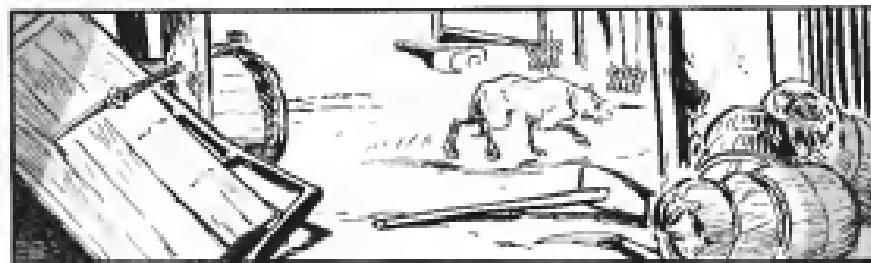
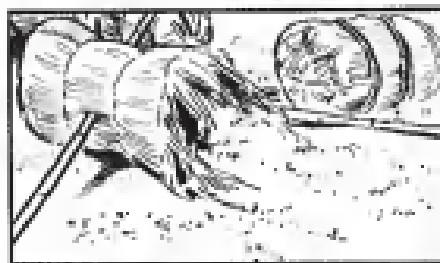




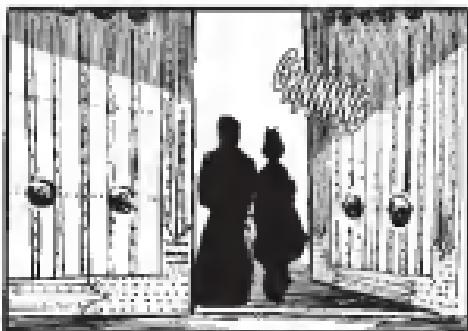
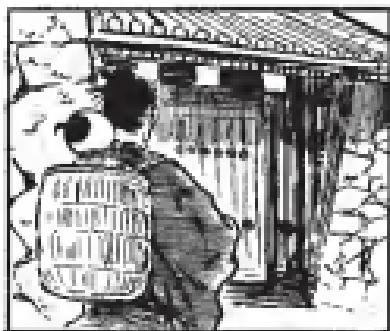


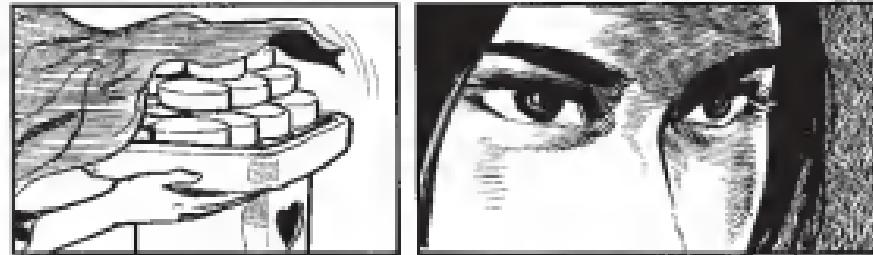
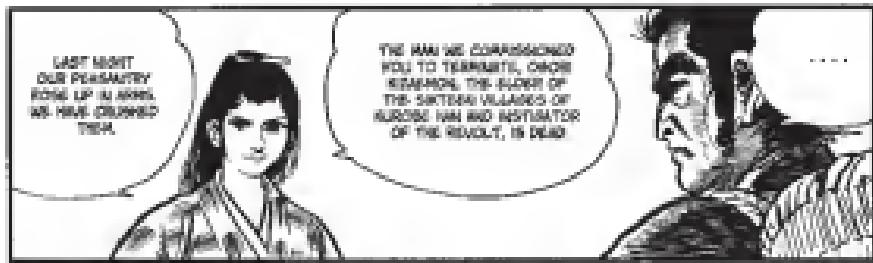


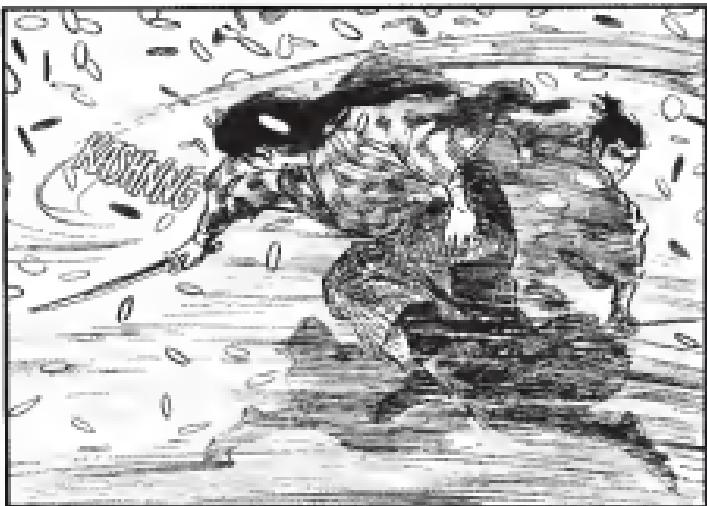
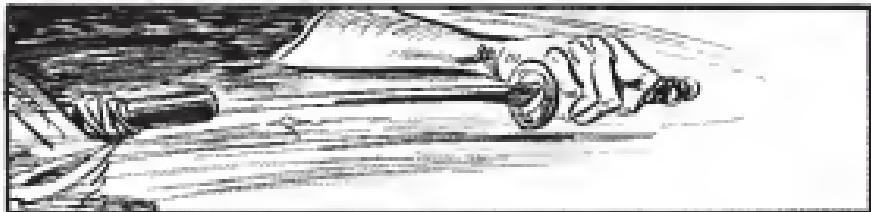
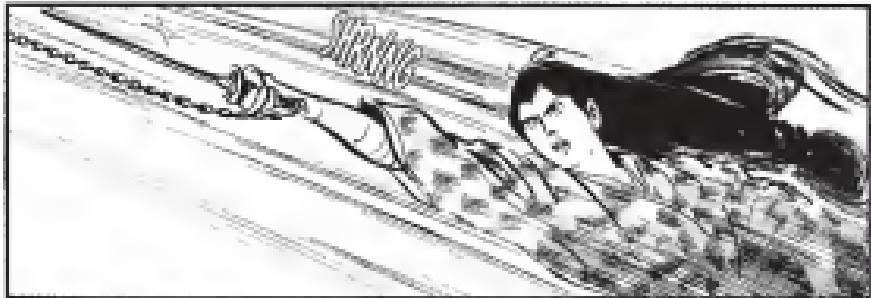
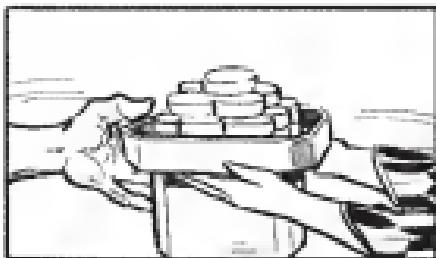




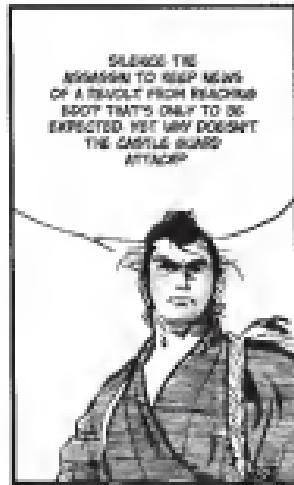
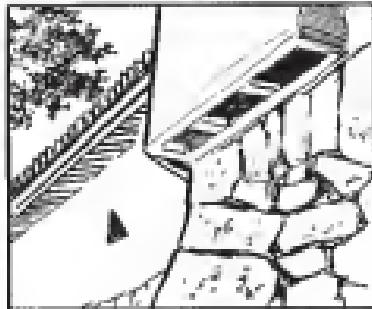
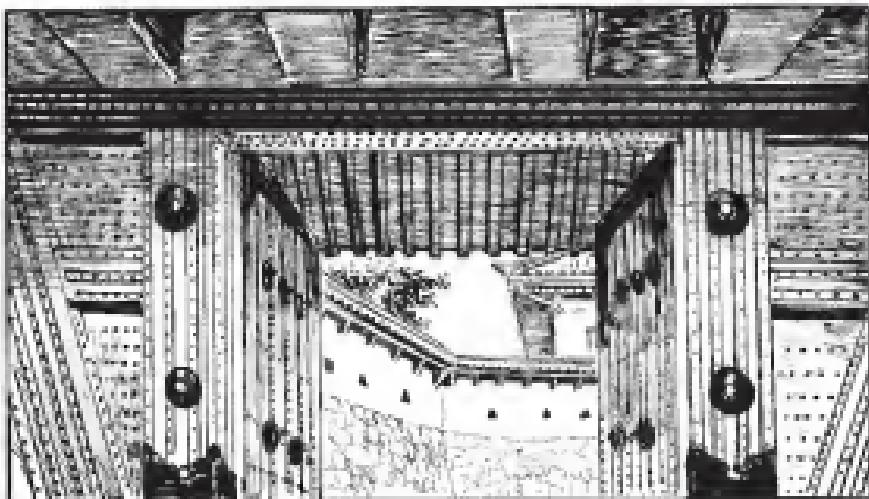


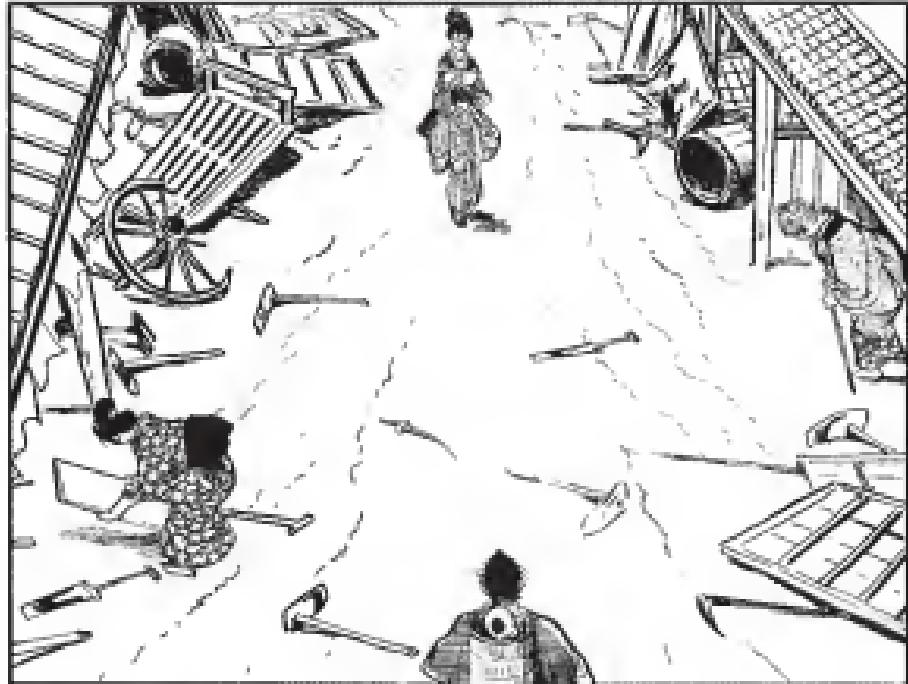


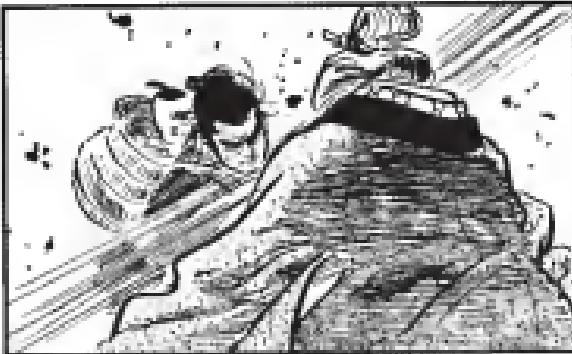


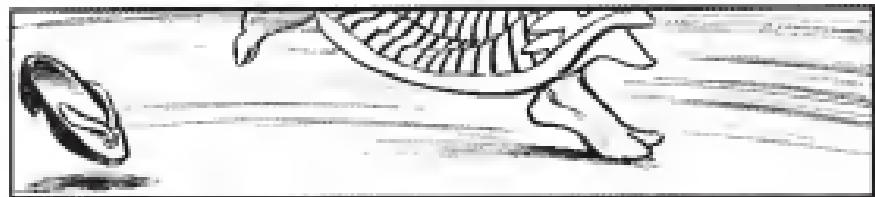


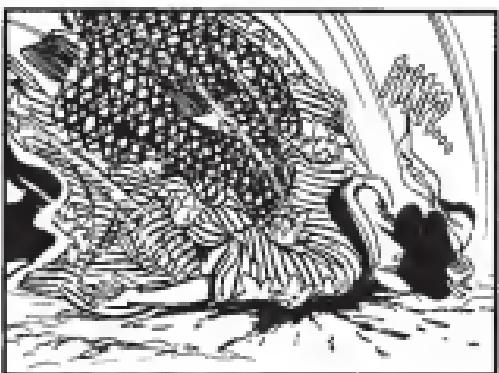
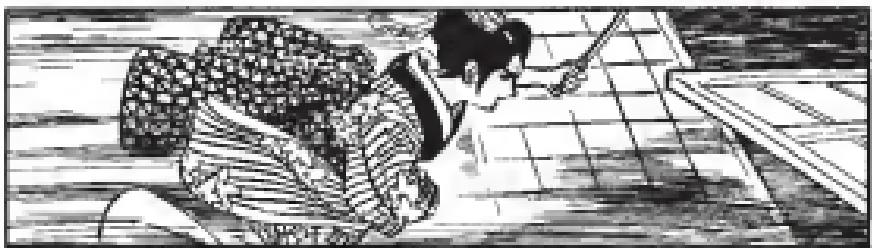




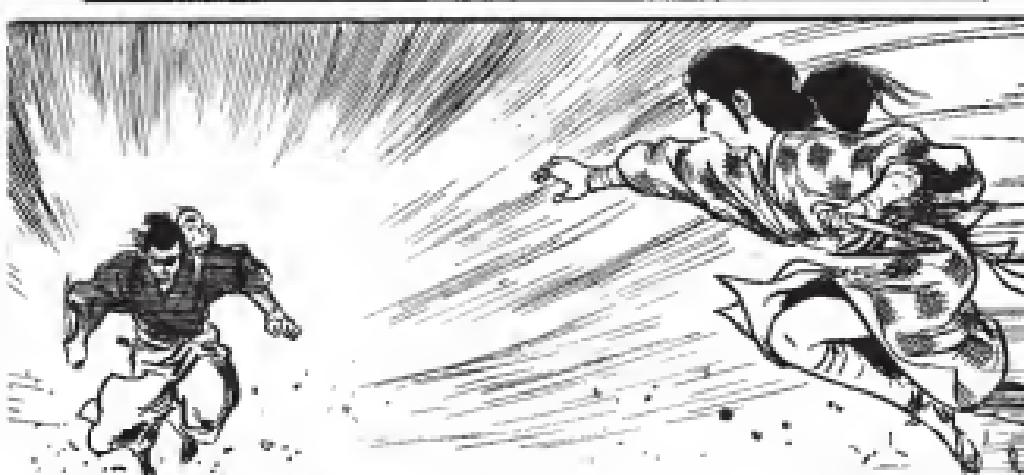


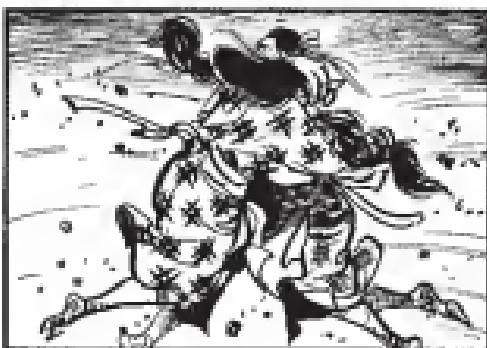












URAHARA... ASL. AS  
STRONG AS EXPECTED,  
AND ALONE. LONG WOLF  
AND CO. BUT, BUT YOU  
CANNOT ESCAPE OUR EIGHT  
BATTLES OF DESERT -  
NOT EVEN... NOW.  
REH REH...

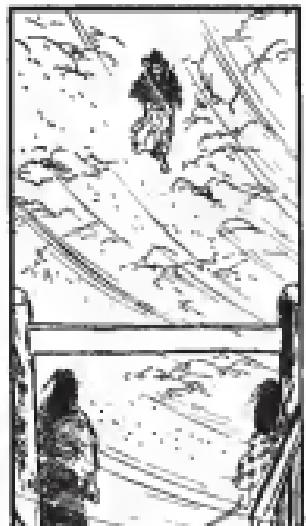
EIGHT  
BATTLES.  
HACHIMON  
TOMONOKI

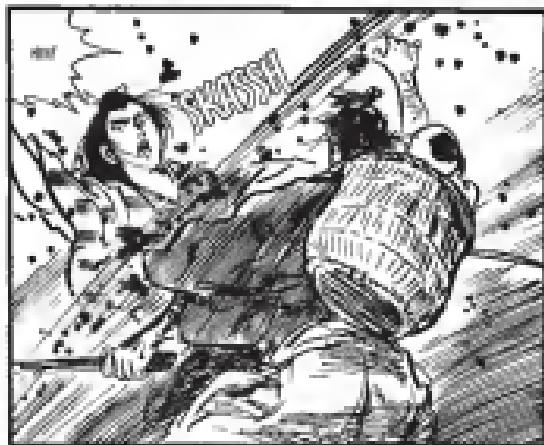
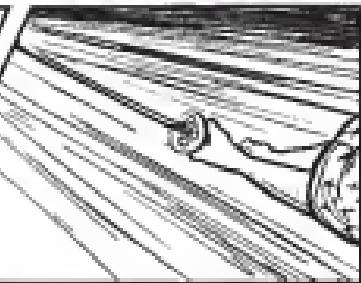
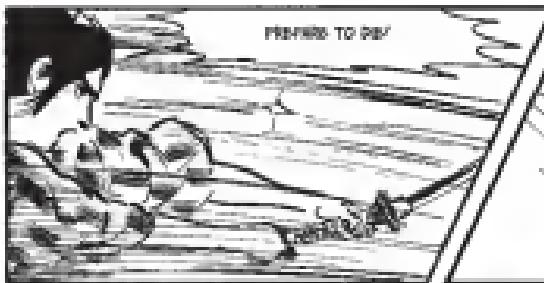
REH REH REH.  
THE HACHIMON  
FOAMED OF THE EIGHT  
BATTLES OF DESERT.  
PLEASE REH. YOU  
WILL NEVER...

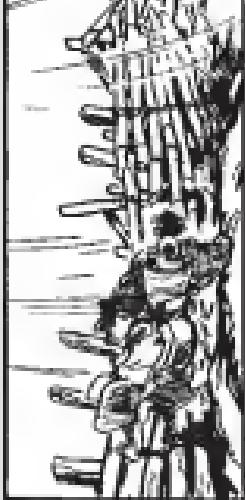
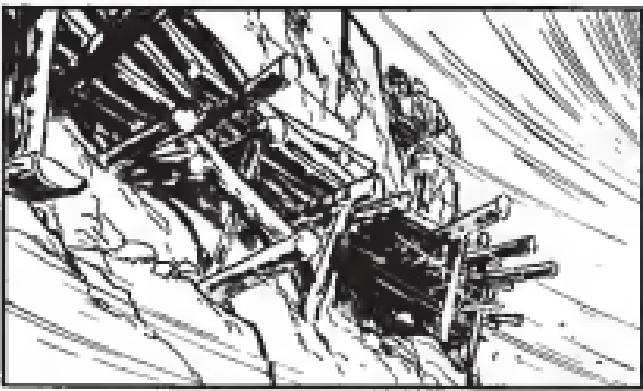
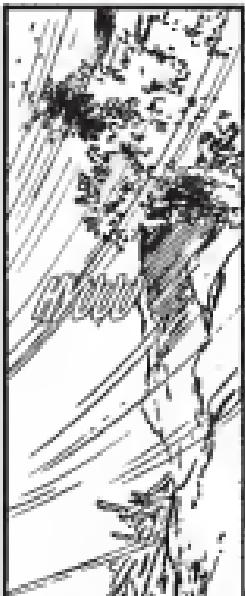


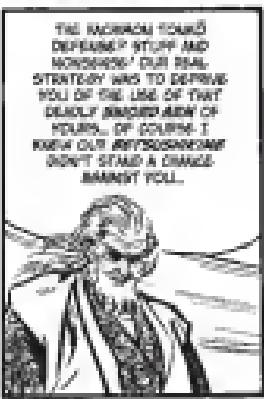
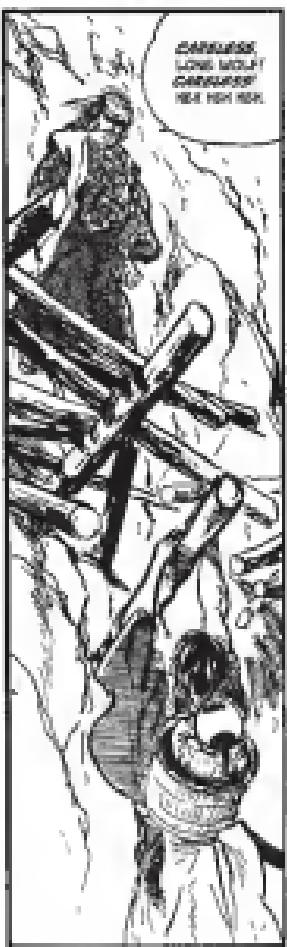
WHICH MEANS,  
TWO MORE  
TO GO...

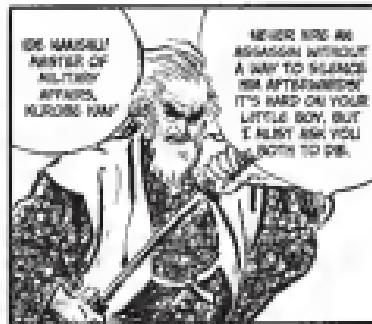
THE MOST  
DANGEROUS  
ANTAGONIST  
OF ALL...

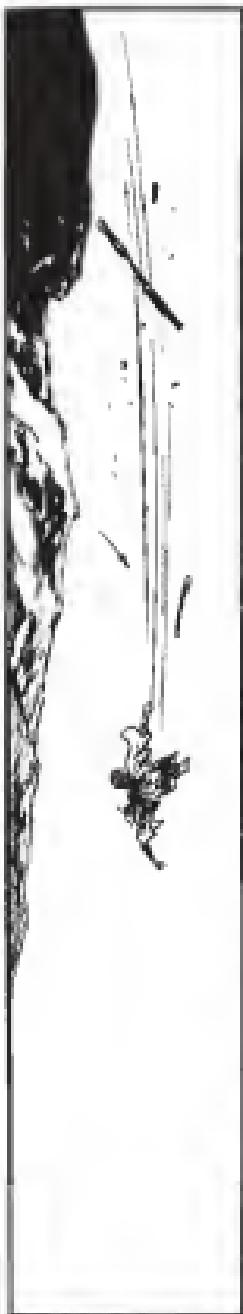






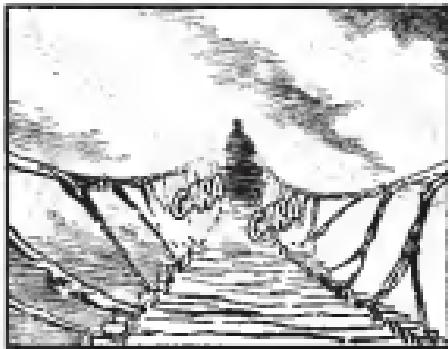
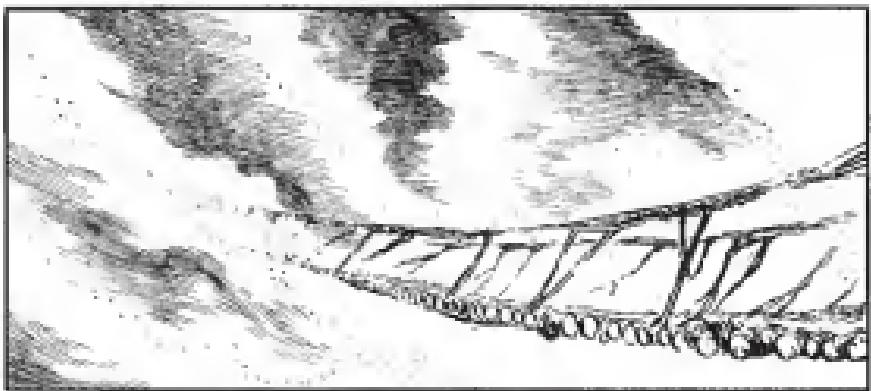




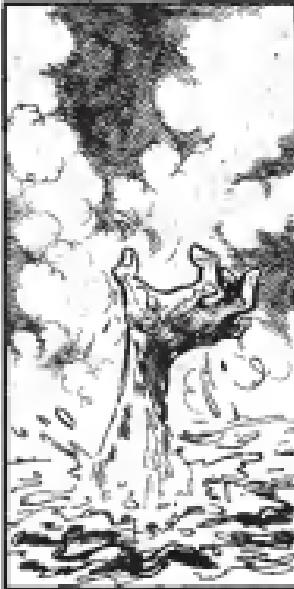


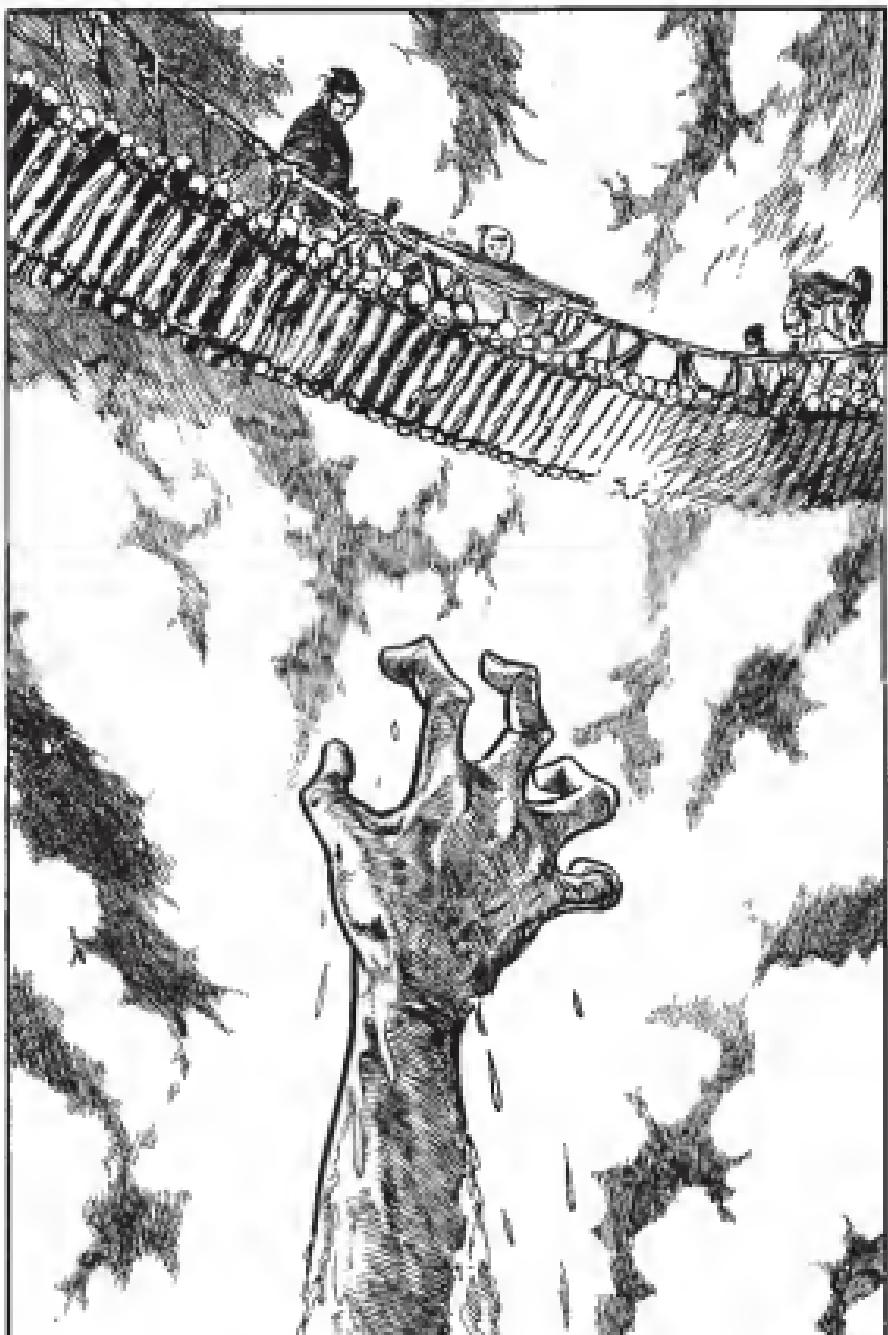


the eighth  
**Wings  
to  
the  
Bird,  
Fangs  
to  
the  
Beast**



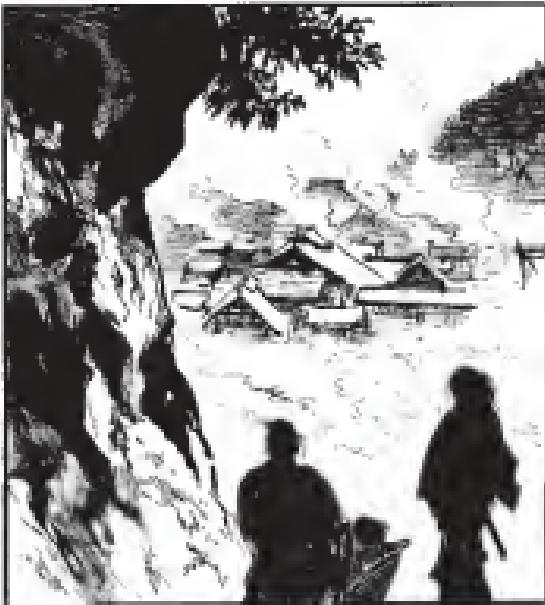
YUBARA-OKU  
NOT SPREAD SPA



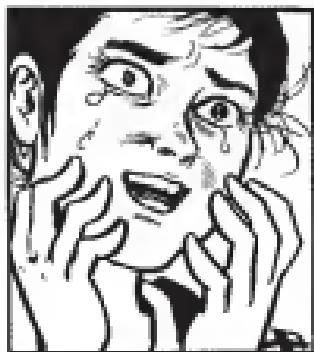
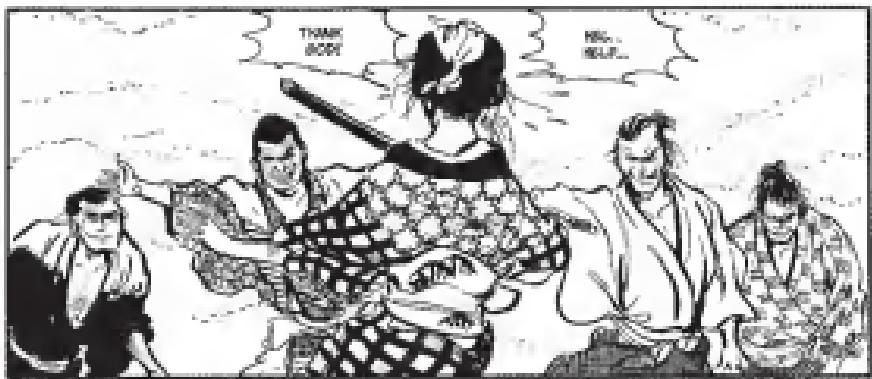




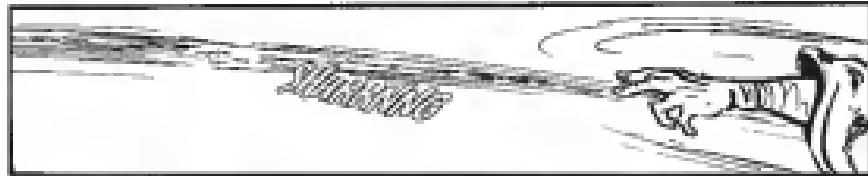






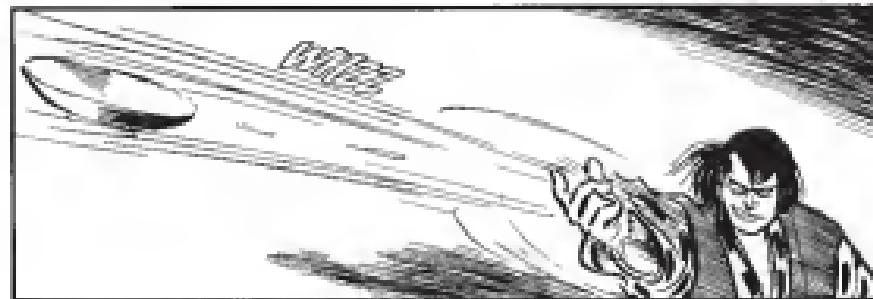
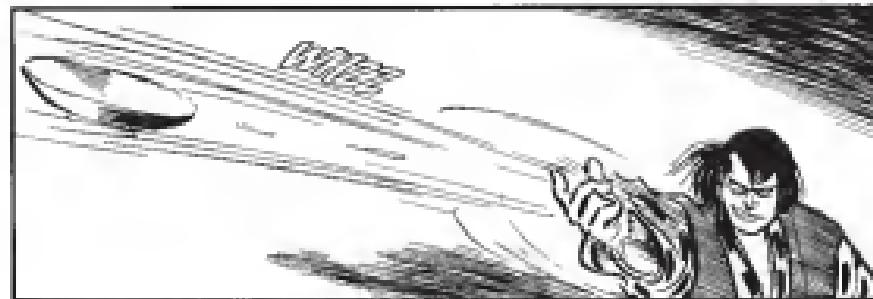
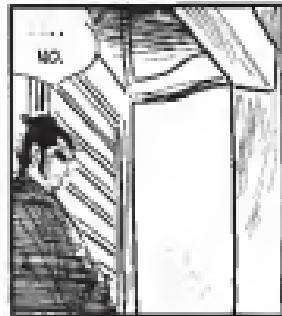










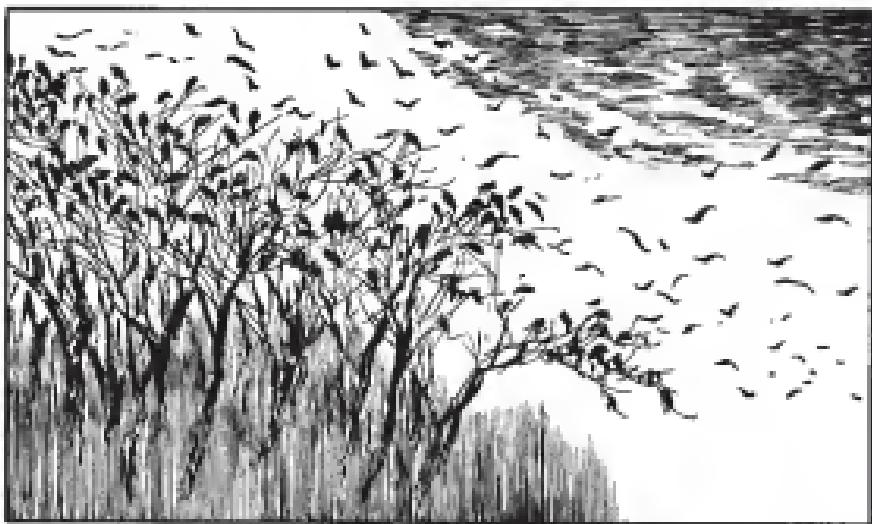














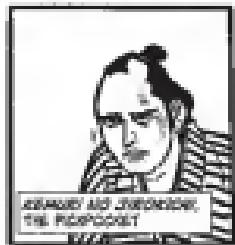
CHOGA AND JINADA, THE VAROLAS



ASUCHIBA AND O-SEN, THE  
PROSTITUTE AND CRUEL THIEF



SHOGOJI, THE  
STRICT-LACED MERCHANT



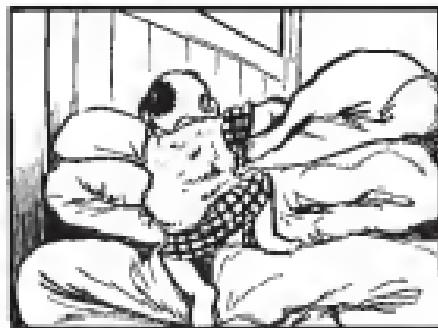
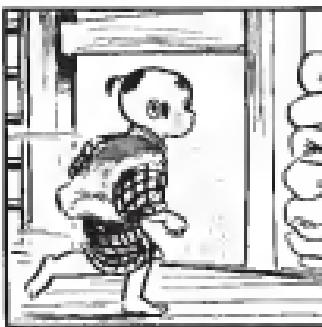
ASANO AND JIYODA-CHI, THE PIMP-DOGGIE

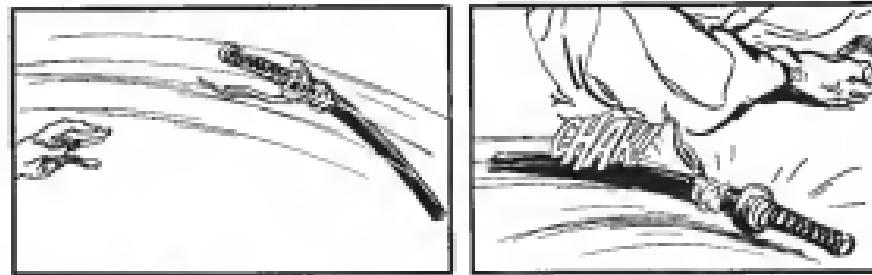


FEIJIAN, THE  
WANDERING MONK



JOHAN, THE TUBERCULAR SAMURAI  
AND HIS AISHI SERVANT, KOKODOGI





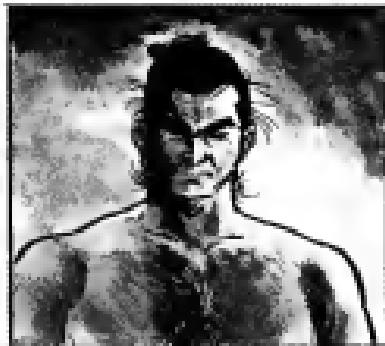


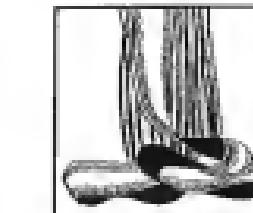






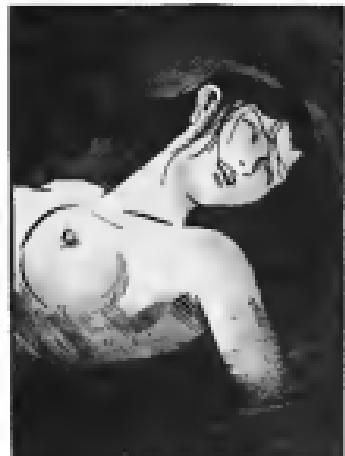
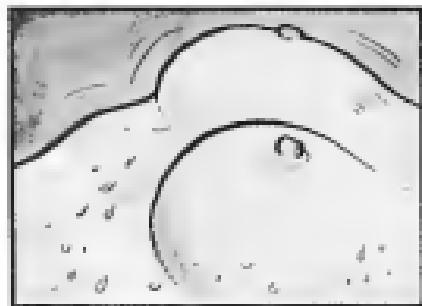


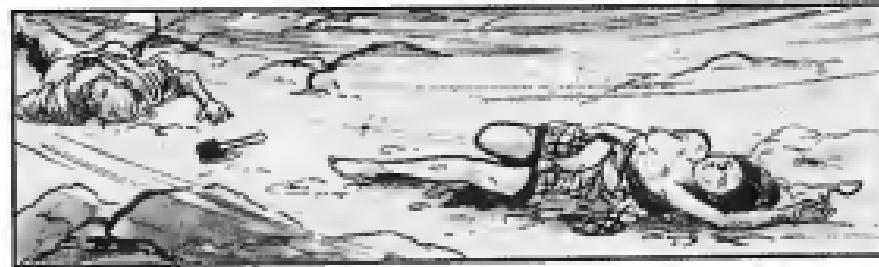




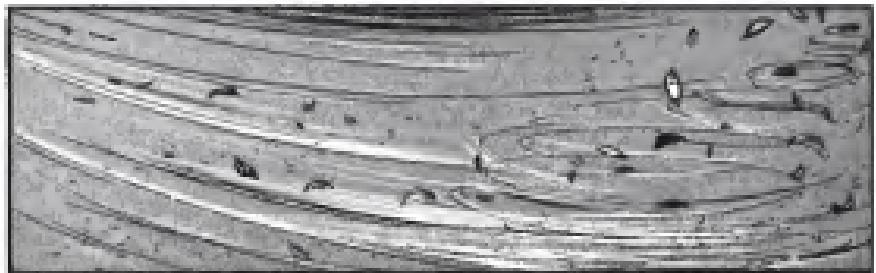


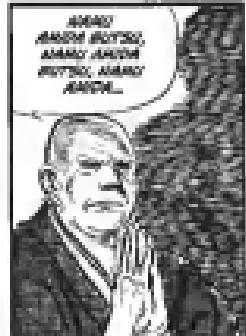


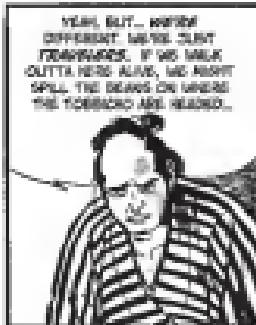


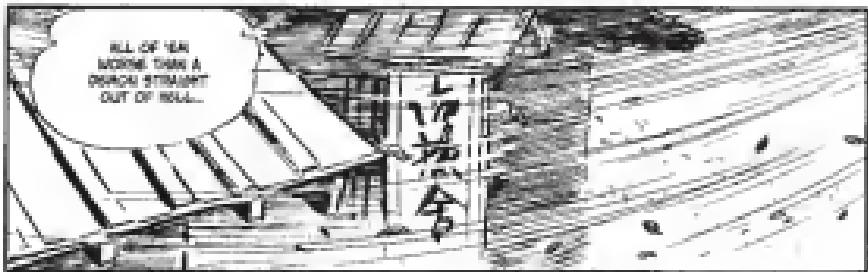


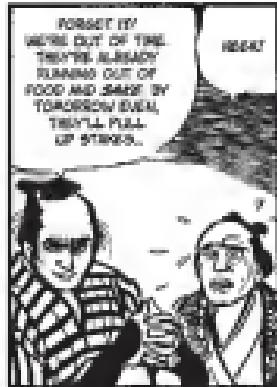












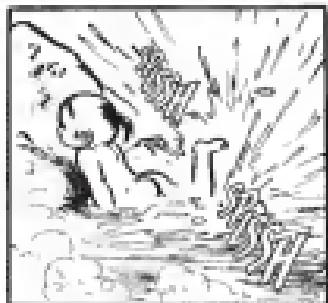
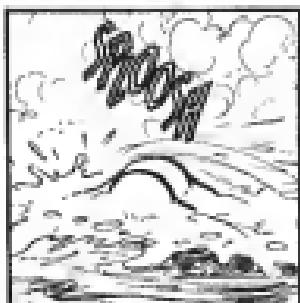
D-I  
DON'T WANT  
TO END THIS UP  
WITH BEATING YOU!

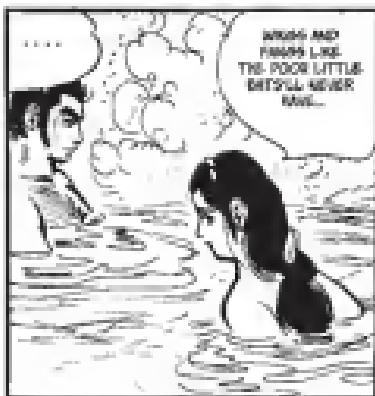


NO KIDS  
SHOULD BE  
EXPOSED TO  
SUCH THINGS  
EXCEPT THIS DOG'S  
AND HIS FAMILY  
FILLED FORGET  
ABOUT ME.



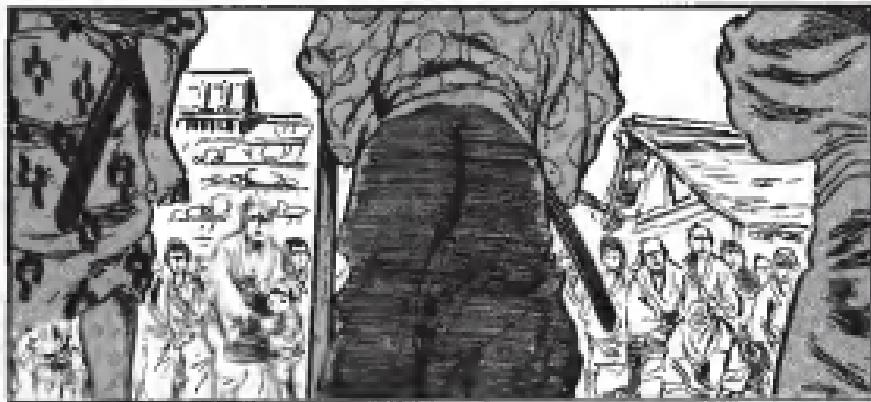




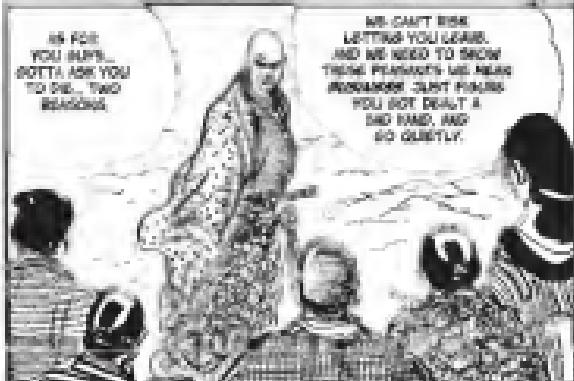
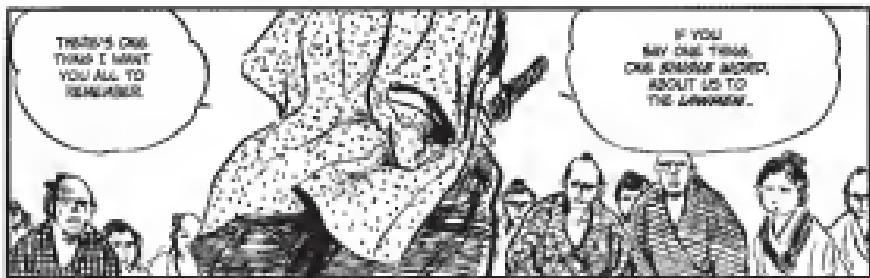


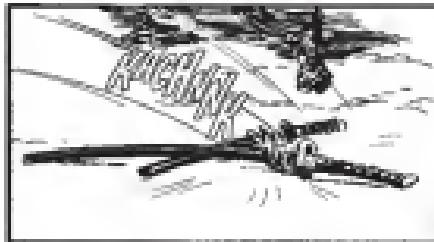




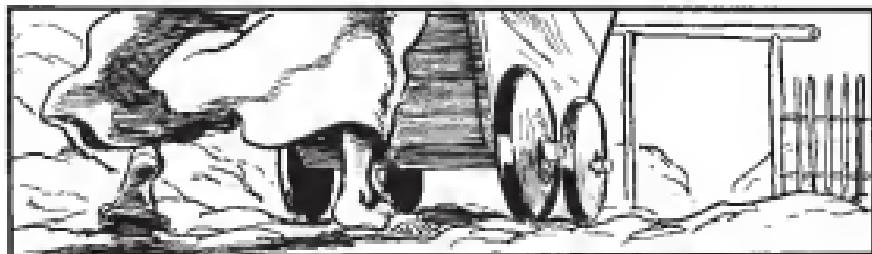
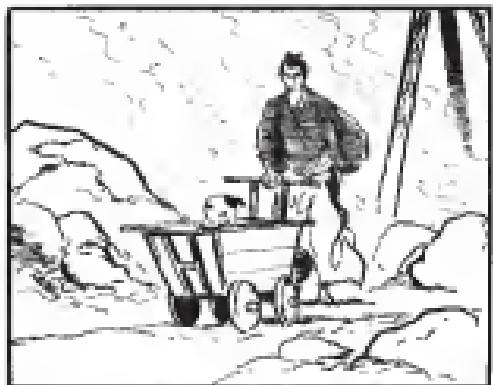


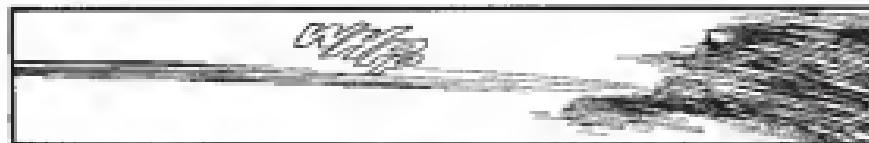


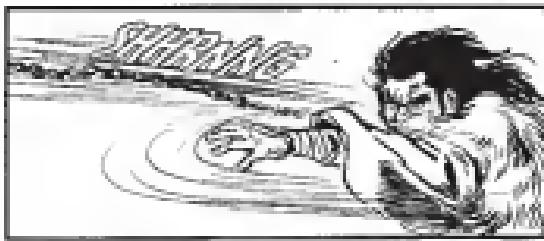


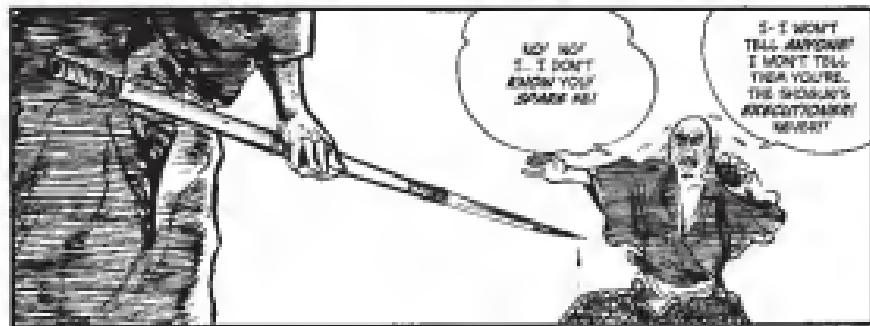


















the ninth

# The Assassin's Road

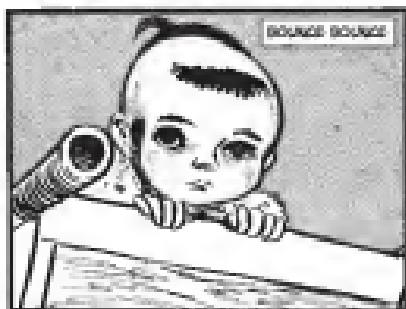


IF YOU HAVE A HARD SHIT  
ON A MOUNTAINTOP  
DOWN IT ROLLS,  
COVERED WITH SAND  
BOUNCE BOUNCE BOUNCE...



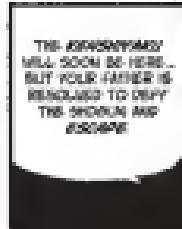
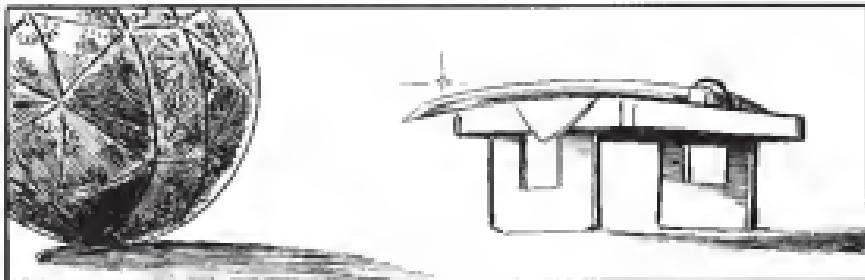


BOUNCE BOUNCE BOUNCE BOUNCE  
THAT ONE BOUNC BOUNCE BOUNCE  
THIS ONE BOUNC BOUNCE BOUNCE

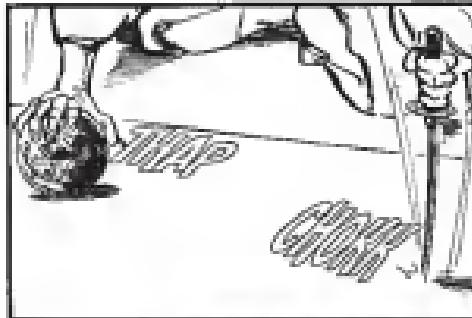


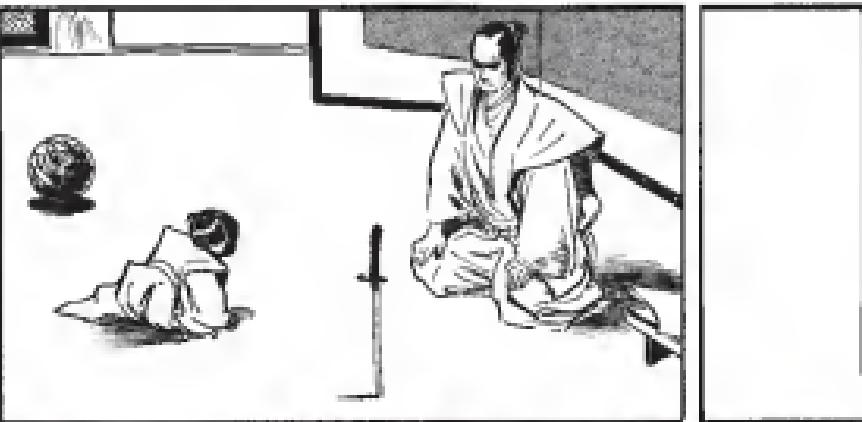
BOUNCE BOUNCE  
THAT ONE BOUNCE BOUNCE  
THIS ONE BOUNCE BOUNCE



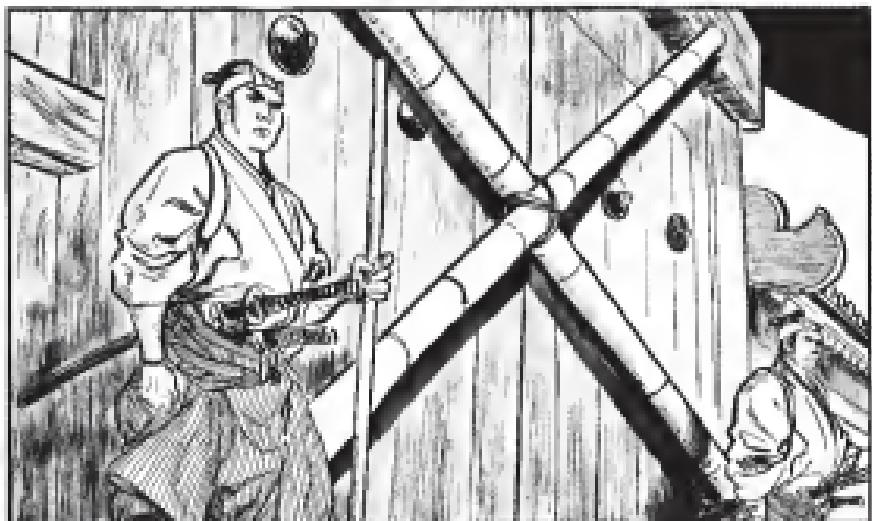


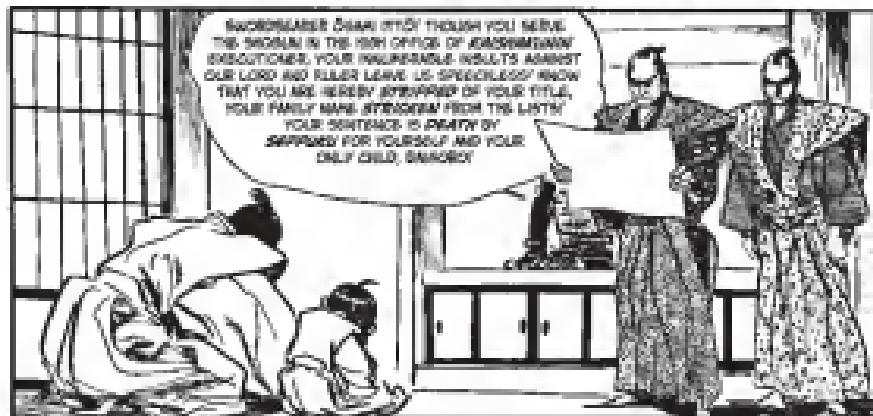
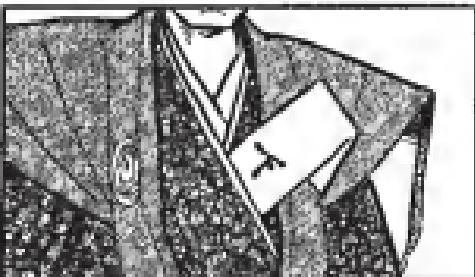




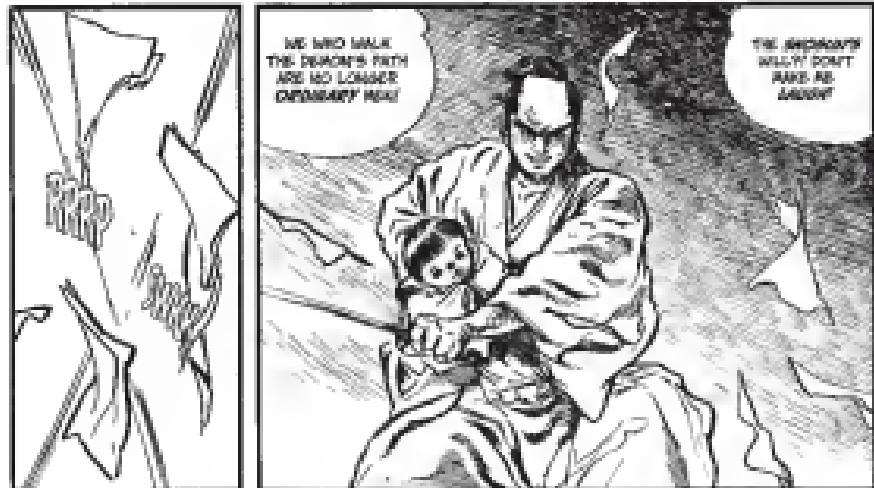




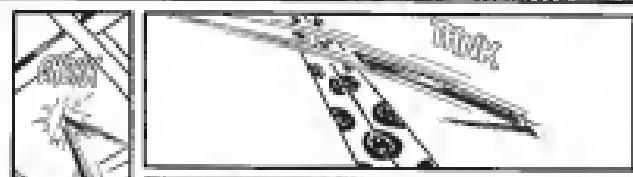




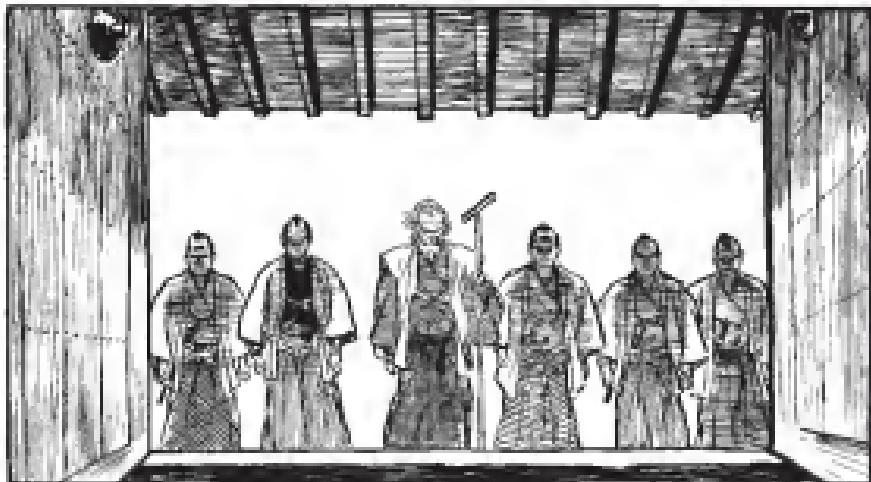
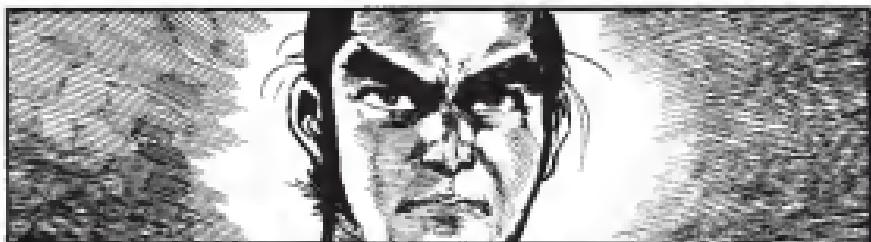
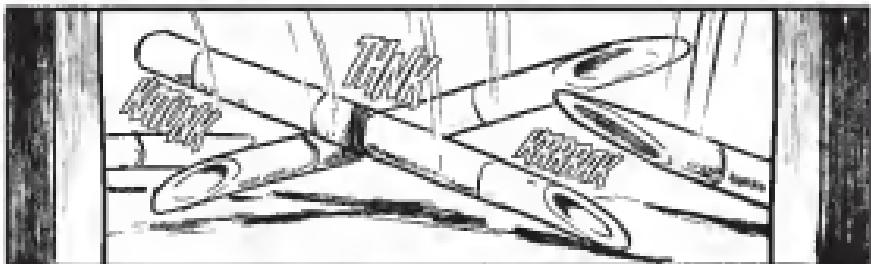
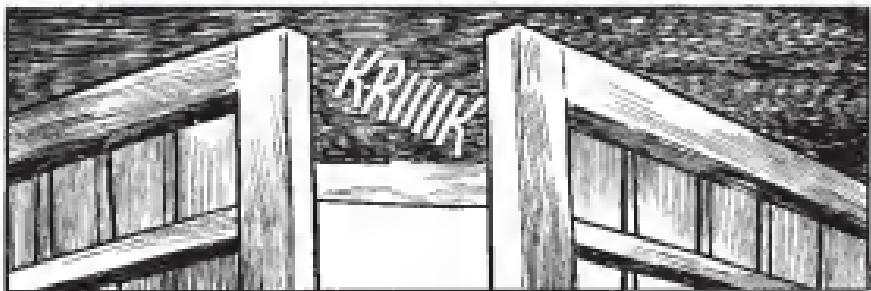


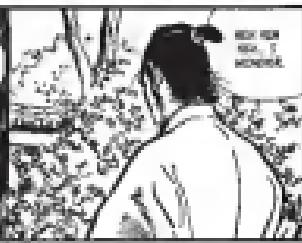




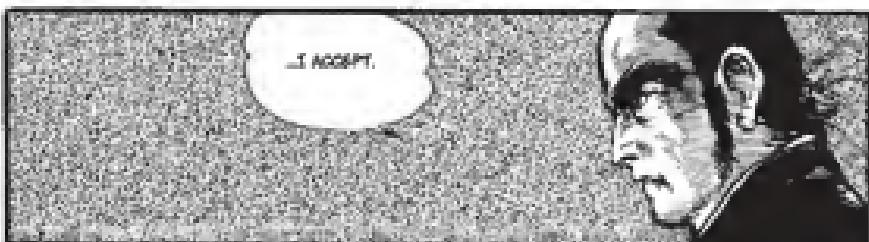
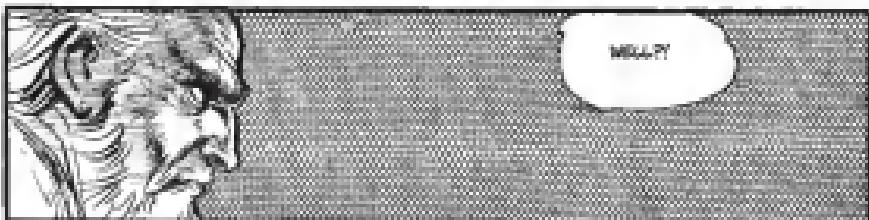
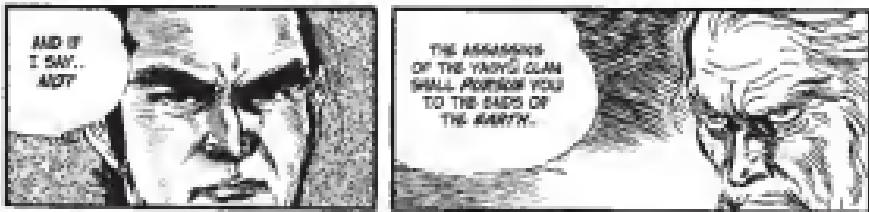


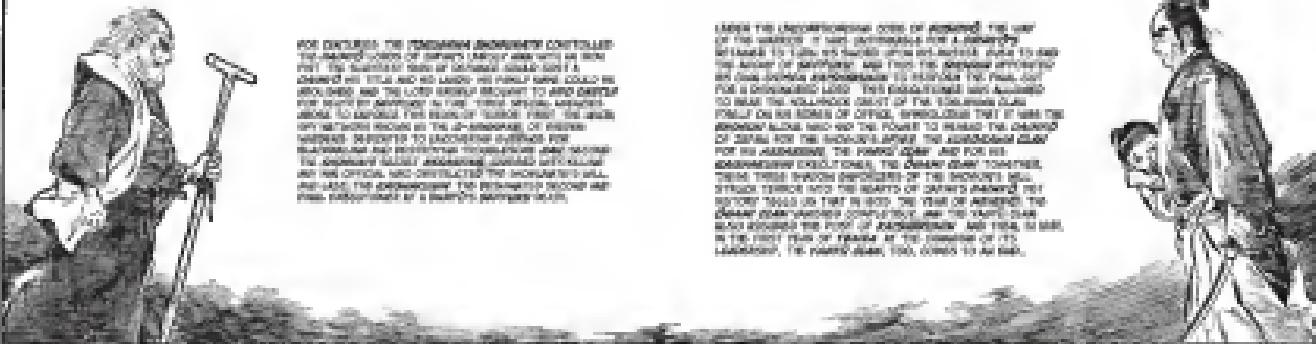










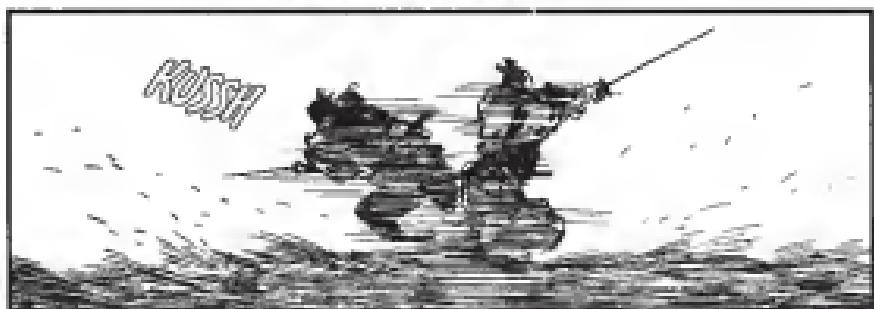


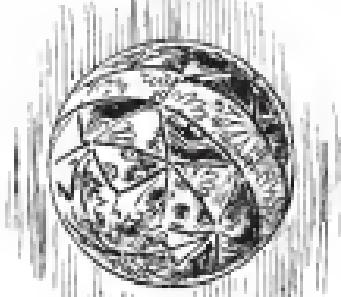
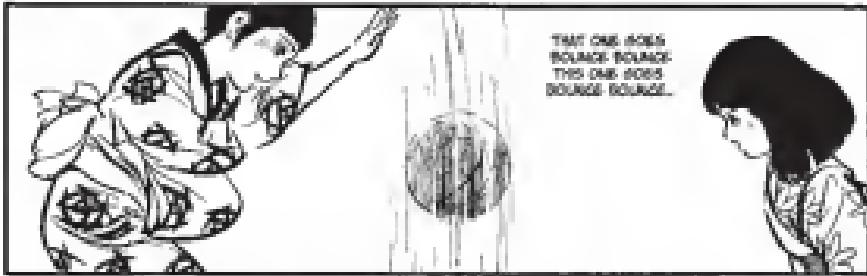
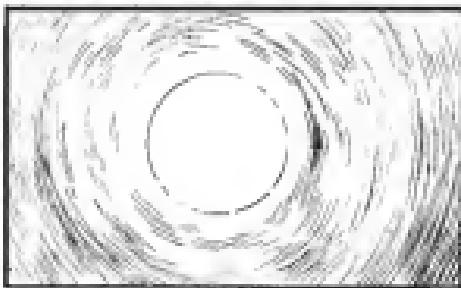
AMERICAN  
ARTS EDUCATION  
FOR HISTORY,  
THE WOLF AND CULT  
IN ONE NATION TO  
THE WORLD











LONG WOLF AND CO. BOOK ONE: THE END  
TO BE CONTINUED

# GLOSSARY

## **ashigaru**

A foot soldier in the employ of a *daimyō*, lowest of the warrior ranks.

## **bangashira**

Commander of the guard. Each *han* had a standing guard — the *ban* — of samurai to protect the lord and castle. The *ō-ban-ezure* was the supreme commander of the guard, the general of the *han* army.

## **bushi**

A samurai. A member of the warrior class.

## **ō-metsuke**

Chief inspector. The supreme inspector of the shogunate, the *ō-ban-ezure* of the Tokugawa power structure.

## **daikan**

The primary local representative of the shogunate in territories outside of the capital of Edo. The *daikan* and his staff collected taxes owed to Edo and oversaw public works, agriculture, and other projects administered by the central government.

## **daikan-sho**

The office of the *daikan*.

## **daimyō**

A feudal lord.

## **danzai**

The samurai's right to put to death anyone who insulted their honor.

## **deiri**

A fight between rival *yakuza* gangs. From their clothes, speech, and greetings, it is clear that the house of Jitō are *yakuza*, Japan's criminal syndicates. In the Edo period, *yakuza* were a common part of the landscape, running houses of gambling and prostitution. As long as they did not overstep their bounds, they were tolerated by the authorities, a tradition little changed in modern Japan.

## **dono**

A term of respect for a higher-ranking official or aristocrat. A more common term of respect among civilians is *sama*, indicating more respect than the most common *san*.

## **dōtanuki**

A battle sword, literally "sword that cuts through torsos."

## **Edo**

The capital of medieval Japan.

## **fudasho**

Merchant houses specializing in rice. They loaned gold to *han* governments, loans secured by the *han*'s projected rice revenues.

**han**

A feudal domain.

**hanshi**

Samurai in the service of a han.

**hollyhock crest**

Each samurai family had a family crest considered synonymous with the clan itself. The Tokugawa clan crest was a three-leaved hollyhock. To point one's sword toward the shogun's crest was to point your sword toward the shogun himself, an unforgivable act of treason.

**honmaru**

The large, central keep of a Japanese castle.

**Iga-yashiki**

There were two main ninja clans in Japan, from the Iga and Kaga regions respectively. The Iga ninja served the shogunate. The Iga-yashiki (residence) was their base in Edo.

**jigoku-tabi**

Literally, "a journey to hell." When yakuza would go ask allies to help them in a fight.

**juku**

Way station. The major byways through Japan during the Edo period had way stations a day's walk apart with inns, tea houses, and other facilities for the traveler. The names of these old way stations still remain in many Japanese cities.

**kaishaku**

A second. In the rite of *seppuku*, a samurai was allowed death with honor by cutting up his own abdomen. After the incision was complete, the second would perform *kaishaku*, severing the samurai's head for a quick death. The second was known as a *kaishakunin*.

**Kannon**

Buddhist goddess of mercy.

**karō**

Elders, usually the senior advisor to a *daimyō*, the lord of a han. Since the *daimyō* was required to alternate each year between life in his castle in the *kai* and his residence in Edo, the capital and the seat of the Tokugawa shogunate, there was usually an *Edo-karō* (Edo elder) and a *han-karō* (han elder), who would administer affairs in Edo or in the han when their lord was away.

**kenshishyaku**

The shogunate official present at an execution to confirm the death of the person to be killed.

**kooku**

1. A bale of rice. The traditional measure of a han's wealth, a measure of its agricultural land and productivity.  
2. Standard time unit in the Edo period. Approximately two hours long, further sub-divided into three equal parts.

**kōmori**

A han.

**Kongming**

A famous general and tactician who lived during the warring states period in ancient China, born 181 A.D., died 234 A.D.

**kuramoto**

**Merchant houses.** Under the Confucian social order imposed by the Tokugawa shogunate, merchants ranked a lowly fourth in Japan's four-suzata caste society. But, in fact, by the middle Edo period the merchant class had gained tremendous wealth and power by managing the assets of the *han* and selling rice and other products. Many *han* fell deeply into debt to the big merchant houses.

**makura-sagashi**

**Literally pillow searcher.** A wandering thief who preyed on other travelers, stealing their valuables from under their pillows while they slept.

**meido**

**The afterlife.** The land after death. Believed to be a place of darkness. Only a few Buddhist sects described a division between heaven and hell.

**meifumado**

**The Buddhist hell, the way of demons and damnation.**

**metsuke**

**Inspector,** a post combining the functions of chief of police and chief intelligence officer.

**naenu amida butsu**

**One of the most common of all Buddhist chants, calling for mercy in the world to come.**

**ogansu**

**To pray**

**o-niwa-han**

**"One in the garden."** A ninja. The secret agent of the shogunate, heard but never seen.

**rōnin**

**A masterless samurai.** Literally one adrift on the waves. Members of the samurai caste who have lost their masters through the dissolution of *hen*, expulsion for misbehavior, or other reasons. Prohibited from working as farmers or merchants under the strict Confucian caste system imposed by the Tokugawa shogunate, many impoverished *rōnin* became "lured guns" for whom the code of the samurai was nothing but empty words.

**ryō**

**A gold piece.**

**ryū**

**Often translated as "school."** The many variations on swordsmanship and other martial arts were passed down from generation to generation to the offspring of the originator of the technique or set of techniques, and to any *dashu* students that sought to learn from the master. The largest schools had their own *shib* training centers, and scores of students. An effective swordsman had to study the different techniques of the different schools to know how to block them in combat. Many *ryū* also had a set

of special, secret techniques that were only taught to school initiates.

### **Sakušū**

A town in what is today Okayama prefecture.

### **Sanzu-no-kawa**

The river Sanzu, the Japanese equivalent of the river Styx. On their way to the afterlife, the dead must take boats across the river Sanzu.

### **Satōiri ninja**

Ninja in the sato (homeland). In addition to the ninja based in Edo, the shogunate placed ninja undercover in the various *han* of rival lords. These moles would monitor dissident han and gather evidence that could be used to blackmail or dissolve a *han* when it stepped out of line.

### **Seppuku**

The right to kill oneself with honor to atone for failure, or to follow one's master into death. Only the samurai class was allowed this glorious but excruciating death. The abdomen was cut horizontally, followed by an upward cut to spill out the intestines. When possible, a *kanbaku* performed a beheading after the cut was made to shorten the agony.

### **shima**

The zone of death.

### **shinobi**

Ninja. The *jiyū-mitsukō* work undercover, unlike the *shin-ninshō* in Edo.

### **Sun Tzu**

The great 500 B.C. Chinese military strategist, author of the classic *Sun Tzu Bungshō* ("The Art of War").

### **Tōkaidō**

The most important of the Edo-era travel routes, connecting Edo with the "Kansai" region of Kyōto and Ōsaka. Now traversed by freeways and high-speed "bullet" trains.

### **Tokugawa**

The Tokugawa clan, the warlord family that unified Japan following its victory at the battle of Sekigahara in 1600, and ruled until 1867 from its castle in the city of Edo. The period is commonly known as the Edo period. The shōgun was both the head of the Tokugawa clan and the head of the Tokugawa *bakufu* — the shogunate government — that ran national policy and kept the often unruly han at heel.

### **tono**

Lord, *daimyō*. Sometimes used as a form of address, as in *tono-sama*.

### **toseimin**

Literally, "rootless one," one who travels the world. A euphemism for a wandering *jaeger*.

# KAZUO KOIKE

Though widely respected as a powerful writer of graphic fiction, Kazuo Koike has spent a lifetime reaching beyond the bounds of the comics medium. Aside from co-creating and writing the successful *Wolf and Cub* and *Crying Freeman* manga, Koike has hosted television programs; founded a golf magazine; produced movies; written popular fiction, poetry, and screenplays; and mentored some of Japan's best manga talents.

*Wolf and Cub* was first serialized in Japan in 1970 (under the title *Kiture Okami*) in *Manga Action* magazine and continued its hugely popular run for many years, being collected as the stories were published, and reprinted worldwide. Koike collected numerous awards for his work on the series throughout the next decade. Starting in 1972, Koike adapted the popular manga into a series of six films, the *Baby Cart Assassin* saga, garnering widespread commercial success and critical acclaim for his screenwriting.

This wasn't Koike's only foray into film and video. In 1996, *Crying Freeman*, the manga Koike created with artist Ryosuke Iwagami, was

produced in Hollywood and released to commercial success in Europe and is currently awaiting release in America.

And to give something back to the medium that gave him so much, Koike started the *Geiga Semina*, a college course aimed at helping talented writers and artists — such as *Ranma 1/2* creator Rumiko Takahashi — break into the comics field.

The driving focus of Koike's narrative is character development, and his commitment to character is clear: "Comics are carried by characters. If a character is well created, the comic becomes a hit." Kazuo Koike's continued success in comics and literature has proven this philosophy true.



# GOSEKI KOJIMA

Goseki Kojima was born on November 3, 1928, the very same day as the godfather of Japanese comics, Osamu Tezuka. While just out of junior high school, the self-taught Kojima began painting advertising posters for movie theaters to pay his bills.

In 1950, Kojima moved to Tokyo, where the postwar devastation had given rise to special manga forms for audiences too poor to buy the new manga magazines. Kojima created art for *komi-shibai*, or "paper-play" narrators, who would use manga story sheets to present narrated street plays. Kojima moved on to creating works for the *baiku-isei* market, bookstores that rented out books, magazines, and manga to mostly low-income readers. He soon became highly popular among *baiku-isei* readers.

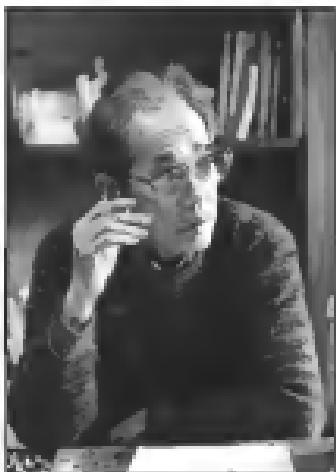
In 1963, Kojima broke into the magazine market with his series *Bejinski*. As the manga magazine market grew and diversified, he turned out a steady stream of popular series

In 1970, in collaboration with Kazuo Koike, Kojima began the work that would seal his reputation, *Kewpie*

*Oboshi (Low Wolf and Chō)*. Before long the story had become a gigantic hit, eventually spinning off a television series, six motion pictures, and even theme song records. Koike and Kojima were soon dubbed the "golden duo" and produced success after success on their way to the pinnacle of the manga world.

When *Manga Japan* magazine was launched in 1994, Kojima was asked to serve as consultant, and he helped train the next generation of manga artists.

In his final years, Kojima turned to creating original graphic novels based on the movies of his favorite director, Akira Kurosawa. Kojima passed away on January 5, 2000 at the age of 71.



# THE RONIN REPORT

*by Tim Ervin*

As with most occasions of men taking up arms, the reason for the evolution of the samurai warrior was simple: to protect the people of an organized society to control a population in that society, and to go forth and conquer new lands. From the time Japan was first occupied it was besieged with violence. Waves of immigrating peoples washed across the shores of the Japanese island chain. From the North came a Caucasian race from what is now southern Russia, and from the South came what would be later known as Korean peoples, carrying Chinese customs and religions. Naturally, the societies clashed and elbowed for room on the islands. This struggle for land and survival fueled the structures of a society in need of protection from outside influences, and as we see in society today in order to defend one's people from another's it is necessary to raise arms and join together in force. Thus samurai warriors naturally evolved in what would become Japan.

Legend, however, tells the story differently, involving elemental gods forming Japan through divine influence and

bestowing weapons with supernatural powers upon mortal warriors. One of these warriors was Prince Yamato. In his book *Samurai: The Story of a Warrior Tradition*, Harry Cook asserts that Prince Yamato was "in many ways a role model for (future) samurai." Yamato was fearless, cunning, and highly skilled in martial arts. Legend says that he was given the divine sword "Cloud Cluster" (or "Sword of the Village of the Clustering Clouds") in order to help him quell the barbarian Ainu people, a largely Caucasian people who defied bureaucratic order and competed for land. In an interesting aside, Cook writes in his book that Prince Yamato's father, Emperor Keiko, was by legend the first to apply the title "shogun" to one of his generals, and the term "shogun" literally translates to "barbarian-subduing general."

When the first shogun was named such, the imperial court was strong in influence but short on military prowess. Imperial forces sent to subdue the barbarians were often defeated miserably and, in order to defend their claims, many land owners began training and keeping armed retainers (or knights). These retainers form the basic root of what we know as samurai. As the overlords became more

powerful and claimed imperial descent, they began to clash amongst one another for control of land and vassals. Samurai warriors acted as pawns in power struggles, and those who were the most cunning, skilled, and powerful succeeded in claiming more land and influence for their lords. Constant wars and intermarrying between powerful clans led to consolidation of power, and eventually a small number of clans were fighting large-scale, bloody wars. These wars continued for hundreds of years, relying on generation after generation of familial revenge and hunger for land and power. These civil wars, as well as wars against invading forces such as Kublai Khan's massive Mongolian onslaught in the late 12th century, brought refinement to samurai warrior tactics and changed the focus of weaponry from the bow and arrow to the sword.

*(to be continued)*



Like *Wolf and Cub* (*Kaze no Okami* in Japan) is acknowledged worldwide for the brilliant writing of series creator Kazuo Koike and the groundbreaking cinematic visuals of the late Goseki Kojima. Creating unforgettable imagery of stark beauty, kinetic fury, and visceral thematic power, the epic samurai adventure has influenced a generation of visual storytellers both in Japan and in the West.

*"It takes you to another time, and to a frightening, alien land, windswept and gray. Koike and Kojima tell their story masterfully and artfully, portraying a man, a boy, and a country on their journey into Hell."*

—Frank Miller

■ EISNER AWARD WINNER  
■ HARVEY AWARD WINNER

GRAPHIC NOVEL / MANGA



*Front cover illustration  
by FRANK MILLER  
and LYNN VARLEY*

狼  
子  
之  
焉